THE EXPERIMENT:

OR, THE *Shorteſt Way with the Diſſenters* EXEMPLIFIED.

Being the CASE of Mr. *Abraham Gill*, a Diſſenting Miniſter in the Iſle of *Ely*,

AND

A Full Account of his being ſent for a SOLDIER, by Mr. *Fern* (an Eccleſiaſtical Juſtice of Peace) and other CONSPIRATORS.

To the Eternal Honour of the Temper and Moderation of High Church Principles.

Humbly Dedicated to the QUEEN.

London, Printed: And Sold by *B. Bragg*, at the *Blue-Ball* in *Ave-Mary-Lane*. MDCCV.

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EXPERIMENT:

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BRITISH MUSEUM
SALE DUPLICATE
1787

TO THE QUEEN.

MADAM,

THis Dedication is not so much a Compliment to your Person, as an Appeal to your Justice.

Your Protestant Dissenting Subjects have your Sacred Promise of Protection, they behaving themselves Dutifully and Peaceably to your Government, and Obedient to the Laws: And, Madam, *as they cannot be so ignorant of their own Happiness under your gentle Government, or so blind to their own Interest as to forfeit your Favour by any breach of their Duty; so they cannot doubt of the full Performance on your Majesty's part, of all that your Majesty has been graciously pleas'd to assure them of under the Sanction of your Royal Word.*

The Toleration of their religious Liberty has been secur'd to them by Law; and your Majesty has been pleas'd to add to the Force of that Law your Royal Word, that it shall be inviolably preserv'd.

Your Majesty's Protestant Dissenting Subjects lay at your Feet the following Relation, with all Humility appealing to your Royal Judgment, whether both their Toleration is not herein violently invaded, and your Majesty's Honour and sacred Promise at least attempted to be violated in the illegal arbitrary Methods made use of to oppress one of their Ministers, and suppress an Assembly of several Hundreds of your Loyal and Peaceable Dissenting Subjects.

They remonstrate, and in the humblest manner Complain to your Majesty of the Violence and horrid Practices made use of to Defame, Persecute, Imprison and Ruin a Man, whose principal visible Crime is Serving God according to his Conscience, and Teaching the same to others. They humbly present themselves at your Royal Feet, as wounded through the sides of this injur'd Person, and are your Majesty's humble Petitioners, that you will be graciously pleas'd to testifie your Dislike of the Oppressions and Injustice of their Enemies, in such manner as to your great Wisdom shall seem meet.

In your Majesty's Favour and Justice they hope for exemplar Animadversions on these unchristian Practices, and have a full Confidence in your Royal Promise, that they shall not be abridg'd of nor ill treated for that Liberty, which being settled first by the Laws of God and Nature, and since that by the Laws of this Land, is their legal

Right, and which your Majesty's just Sence of its Reasonableness has mov'd you to resolve to maintain.

They humbly commit themselves and their Cause to your Majesty's Protection, imploring your Royal Regard so far and no farther as every Article advanc'd in their behalf in this Book is positively and exactly conformable to Truth and direct Meaning, being at all times ready to come forth and confront, even in your Royal Presence, all the Allegations to the contrary.

Having thus publickly appeal'd to God and your Majesty, they can no longer Doubt either of the Blessing from above, or the Protection and Assistance of your Majesty below: and as your Throne has been a famous Refuge to oppress Innocence and Virtue in all Nations, so they doubt not but your own Subjects shall yet have the Honour and Happiness of your powerful Protection as far as Justice and Law is on their side.

Nor are they the less confident of your Majesty's Protection for their differing in Judgment from some few Points profess'd and practis'd by the Church of England *of which your Majesty is the glorious Head, since the Evils they complain of are suffer'd not from the Church of* England *as such, whom they honour, and with whom they covet to live in Charity, Union, and Peace, but by ill Men, who making the Church, Religion, and the Honour of God their Pretence, have broken all the Laws of God, Nature, Humanity, and their Native Country, in a most unheard-of and unaccountable manner, to the Reproach of the Protestant Religion in general, and to the*

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Scandal of the Church they pretend themſelves Members of.

Neither your Majeſty nor the Church of England *will be offended at us for endeavouring to bring our Actions to the Teſt of the Law, and for ſeeking the Protection of your Royal Juſtice.*

Your Majeſty oppreſſes none of your Subjects, the Doctrine of the Church of England *has been declar'd to be inconſiſtent with Perſecution; the Actions of theſe Men therefore, however ſhelter'd under your Authority and the Wings of the Church, will appear to your Majeſty affrontive of your Goodneſs, and highly derogating from the Chriſtian Spirit the Church of* England *profeſſes: the Truth of which, we humbly ſubmit to Your Majeſty's Wiſdom to Diſcover, and to your Juſtice to Reſent, as you ſhall find Cauſe,*

And are, *&c.*

Lately Publiſhed,

THE *Double Welcome:* A Poem to the Duke of *Marlborough.* By the Author of *The True-born Engliſh-man.* Sold by *B. Bragg*, at the *Blue-Ball* in *Ave-Mary-Lane.*

INTRODUCTION.

IN the unhappy Differences between the High-Church Party and the Diſſenters, it has happen'd, as it generally does in all Heats and Animoſities of Parties, that both Sides pretend to be in the right, and both pretend to be abus'd by the other.

The warm Men of the Church have charg'd the Diſſenters with Aſſociating to Deſtroy and Undermine the Church. How they have made good their Charge, is not the buſineſs of this Paper, and has been examin'd elſewhere.

The Diſſenters charge the other with Inſulting them, Perſecuting them, and Invading their Toleration.

Great Endeavours have been us'd to defend the Occaſional Bills from a Charge of Perſecution: and whether they have done that or no, we need not diſpute, but refer to the Conferences on that Head between the Houſes, and which are publiſh'd in Print.

But to leave all doubtful Caſes to ſtand and fall by the Force of their own Truth, I cannot think the World ought to be ignorant of the following Story; that all unbyaſs'd People may ſee, by this Specimen, what theſe Gentlemen would do with the Diſſenters if it lay in their power, and how juſtly they have been charg'd with deſigns to Hang, Baniſh, and Deſtroy the Diſſenters, and reward their Miniſters with the Gallows and the Galleys.

And becauſe I am going to preſent the World with a new *Devil of Loudon*, with a Story ſo black in all its Parts, ſo much the Picture of Hell, and ſo aggravated with inhumane and unchriſtian Circumſtances, that all that read it muſt bluſh for their Native Country, to think ſuch unheard-of Villanies could be acted in it, Crimes ſo abhorr'd by Mankind, that tho' they call themſelves of the Church, we ſhall find all the true Members of the Church, whether Judges, Juſtices, Biſhops, yea even Jaylors themſelves, abhorring it: while, I ſay, I have ſuch a Scene before me, and knowing what ſort of People I have to do with, I ſhall take ſuch an

exact care to have every thing that is here advanc'd ſo atteſted with undeniable Evidence, that Impudence it ſelf, not the helliſh Actors, not the blindeſt Advocates, not the Devil himſelf, ſhall dare to Reply to it.

Slander and Lies fly before Truth as Miſt before the Sun; and this helliſh Aſſociation, form'd againſt an innocent Man, tho' laid as deep as Hell, and proſecuted thro' all the barbarous Extremes of Forgery, Perjury, Violence, Subornation, Inſults, and Revenge, yet at laſt all dwindles away before Truth: Innocence breaks out like the Sun thro' a dark Cloud, the Light of Truth is ſo clear, that Devils ſhun it, Monſters fly from it, and Men of Guilt and Blood hide their Heads at its appearance.

And as I ſhould not have attempted this Relation, had I not had good and undoubted Teſtimony of the Truth of every Article, ſo I write with the greater Aſſurance, ſince I can frankly defie the moſt harden'd Advocate of ſuch a wretched Cauſe to confront the leaſt or minuteſt Circumſtance.

Such direct Teſtimony, ſuch juſt Authorities, ſuch authentick Proofs of every Article, are before me, that no Man could ever deſire to have his Reputation vindicated with more Clearneſs in the Face of the Sun.

As for the Treatment this poor injur'd Man has met with, I would be glad the worſt Enemy in the Nation would give it a Name, and tell us, with ſome little Reaſon at the ſame time, what to call it.

I would have them rummage *Fox*'s Hiſtory of the Popiſh Perſecutions, and tell us where they can match the Uſage this Man has met with; and let us know where ever Biſhop *Gardiner*, or bloody *Bonner*, acted like Theſe Men.

Let them ſhew us ſuch an Eccleſiaſtical Magiſtrate as Parſon *Fern*, and where ever Engliſh-men have been thus treated.

Well might the Parliament paſs a Bill to qualifie Juſtices of the Peace. If this be the fruit of putting Church Parſons into Commiſſions of the Peace, never let *Hudibras* tell us of the Cobler of *New-England*, who

Serv'd his Country in a double
Capacity, to Preach and Cobble.

To let the Reader gradually into this black Story, it is neceſſary to inform him, that in ſeveral publick Printed Books, as well as in common Diſcourſe, the Town has been poſſeſs'd with a Story of a Diſſenting Miniſter in the *Iſle of Ely*, who firſt forg'd Epiſcopal

copal Orders, and preach'd in the Church; but being detected in that, pretended Classical Ordination, and set up a Conventicle; but being prosecuted as a scandalous Fellow, having two or three Wives, four or five Bastards, having once broke out of *Derby* Jayl, play'd a great many villainous Pranks, and being a common Drunkard and Swearer, the Justices took him up as a Vagabond, listed him for a Soldier, and sent him away to *Cambridge*, where having been Arrested for Debt, and thereby got out of the Officer's hands: some Complaints being made by the Dissenters at the Injustice of this —— The Party greet them, by way of Answer, with prodigious Calumnies, and insolent Reproaches of the Man himself, to vindicate the most villainous unheard-of Proceedings that ever this Nation knew.

And as the abominable Insolence of their Actions happen'd to receive a due Censure from the best Lord Chief Justice, and of the most unspotted Character this Age has known; let us see how this Person, as well as the poor Sufferer, is treated on this account by that Man of Fury and Satyr, Mr. *D*—— in the Preface to his Lampoon, call'd, *Moderation Display'd.*

Inveighing against our Men of Moderation in the Church, he says, " Nay, so tender are they of their Dissenting Brethren, that " I am told it has lately been delivered as Law by a great Man in " *W*-----*hall*, That a notorious perjur'd Vagabond, with two " Wives at once, being possest of a separate Congregation, tho' " without any Licence or legal Qualification to preach to them, " shall, for that reason only, be exempt from the late Act for " Listing Vagrants.

Now if, upon reading these Sheets, it should *so fall out*, that after all that has been done or said to or of this poor injur'd Man, it should appear too plain for the most harden'd Lampooner or most impudent Church-Justice to deny, that this is all Malice, Forgery, and Injustice, and, as all the Judges of the Queen's-Bench express it, the deepest Track of Villainy that ever came before them; What will these Men say for themselves, and how will they make Satisfaction to God or Man, to the affronted Dissenters, to their own expos'd Party, and to the poor injur'd Man that has been inhumanely treated?

If, after all their Clamour and barbarous Orders, I make it appear, that this Man never broke out of *Derby* or any other Jayl, never forg'd any Orders, but was fairly ordain'd by a Church of *England* Bishop, was never Perjur'd, or a Vagabond, had never two Wives at once, nor any Bastards, was never seen to be Drunk,

or known to Swear; but that, on the contrary, has been always a ſober, vertuous, and peaceable Liver, a conſtant Reſident at his Cure for eleven or twelve Years together, a Man of Charity, and good Converſation, and, in ſhort, not in the leaſt guilty of one of the Crimes charg'd on him, but that it has been all Forgery, Malice, and Conſpiracy to ruin him, meerly for his quitting the Church, and turning to the Diſſenters.

If this ſhould happen to be made out, as I fairly undertake it ſhall, I crave Leave to draw theſe two Inferences;

1. Thoſe Diſſenters who too haſtily believ'd, and too readily handed on the Clamours and Slanders againſt an innocent Man, through whoſe Sides they were all wounded and aim'd it, ought to acknowledge their want of Conſideration and Caution. 'Tis true, it may be ſaid, in their Excuſe, they could not have imagin'd the Earth had borne ſuch Monſters, and that ſuch a Cloud of Clamours could never be all forg'd; and therefore, in Charity to the Church-men, they were drawn in to Cenſure an Innocent Man, for which they ought to ask his Pardon; and reſtoring him to their juſt Opinion, more diligently guard, for the future, his injur'd Reputation.

2. As to the Forgers of all this, and the Authors of a Treatment too foul to relate, and blacker than the Ink I write it with, I leave their Character to ſeaſon the Pallate of the Reader, after he has been fill'd with Horror at ſome of the moſt villainous Actions the World ever heard of. The Matter of Fact is as follows,

The CASE of Mr. ABRAHAM GILL, &c.

Abraham Gill, the Subject of the enſuing Tragedy, was a Miniſter of the Church of *England*; He was born in *Rivington* in the County of *Lancaſter*, had his Education partly among the Diſſenters, but laſt of all in the Univerſity of *Oxford*, where he commenc'd Batchelor of Arts of *Brazen-Noſe* College.

From whence Conforming to the Church of *England*, he entred into Holy Orders, and was admitted by the preſent Right Reverend the Biſhop of *Cheſter*.

And becauſe his Enemies have had the face to Charge him with forging the Biſhop's Orders, We think it neceſſary, that we may clear every thing as we go along, having abundance of dark things to expoſe and Helliſh Conduct to lay open, to draw this Scene

Before we proceed, and to tell them, that the very Original Orders, Signed by the Bishop of *Chester*'s own Hand, and Seal'd with his Seal, is left with the rest of the Vouchers of this horrid Transaction, at Mr. *John Skey*'s Tobacconist, at the *Black-boy and Three Tobacco-pipes* at *Queenhithe*, where all the World, Friends or Enemies, are promised a free and uninterrupted Opportunity to see them, and detect the Forgeries if they are to be found.

And that it may not be alledg'd, this Freedom of offering a sight of the Originals is but a presumptive Proof, supposing no Man will trouble himself to examine them, (*tho' the Willingness of some Gentlemen to expose the Dissenters in this honest Man's Cause suggests otherwise*) yet eternally to stop the Mouth of the most prepossess'd Malice, a Reverend Clergy-man of their own Church is to be found, honest enough to do Justice to an injur'd Man, and give a Sanction to the Truth.

This Gentleman is one who entred into Orders with Mr. *Gill*, and five Ministers more at the same time, and has honestly sworn it: which Affidavit is left also with the rest of the Vouchers at the Place aforesaid. And now if these Orders are Counterfeit or Forg'd, it may fairly be seen, and Mr. *Gill* be expos'd; but if not, let the World match the villainous Usage this poor Man has met with, if they can.

After this Demonstration of the Certainty and undoubted Truth of his Orders, 'tis humbly desir'd of all those Gentlemen that shall for the future charge him with forging Episcopal Orders, that they would be pleas'd to shew their Faces, that we may see if they do not blush; and that they would tell us their Names, that after some few Examples of this sort made for Satisfaction to Justice and the Law out of the great Number of those that are already detected, they may be recorded, as they deserve, among those that *bear false Witness against their Neighbours.*

To proceed to the History of Mr. *Gill:* After he had thus enter'd into Orders, he preach'd as Curate at *Maney* in the *Isle of Ely*, about 12 Miles from *Wisbich*.

While he Officiated in this Place, he was well receiv'd and belov'd of his Congregation; and we never find any Complaint made of him, save that he set an ill Example to his Neighbours of the Clergy, by invading the Custom of the Country, and Preaching twice a day to the People.

Having been two Years in *Maney*, he received an Invitation from the Inhabitants of *Welney*, or *Welneth*, a Hamlet in the Parish of *Upwell* in the same County, to preach in a certain Privileg'd

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Independent Chapel in this Pariſh; the Right of the Place empowering the Inhabitants to chooſe their own Miniſter.

After long and earneſt Sollicitations from the Inhabitants of *Wilney*, and with the Conſent of his former Hearers, he agreed to go to *Wilney*, and accordingly went and ſettled with his Family in the Parſonage-houſe or Tenement belonging to the ſaid Chapel.

The Freedom with which the Inhabitants of *Wilney* invited Mr. *Gill* to be their Curate, appear'd in their chearful aſſiſting him in his Removal thither, and preparing a Feaſt for his Reception; all the Neighbours in general meeting him to bid him Welcome.

About a Fortnight or Three-weeks after his Settlement at *Wilney*, the Reverend Dr. *Gregg*, Rector of *Upwell*, came to pay him a Viſit, thank'd him for coming to the ſaid Chapel, and declared that he was glad his Pariſhioners were like to be ſo well ſerv'd.

In this Chapel Mr. *Gill* continued about ſeven Years, *viz.* from the Year 1695 to the Year 1702, Preaching twice a day, and Conforming in all things to the Uſage of the Church of *England*. But in proceſs of Time being diſſatisfied in his Conſcience at the Uſe of the Liturgy, he began at ſeveral times to omit ſuch part of the Service as he diſlik'd; till at laſt his Scruples encreaſing, he wholly omitted the Common Prayer, applying himſelf only to the Pulpit, and conceiving he was not under equal Obligation as if Preaching in a Pariſh-Church, the Chapel he preach'd in being wholly Independent, a Privileg'd Place, and in the Power of the People.

As this was the Original of all the ſubſequent Malice of the Church-Clergy, and of the barbarous Proceedings of which we are to give an Account; ſo they are hereby fairly challeng'd to produce one Shadow of a Crime in his Behaviour, which, Humane Frailty excepted, appears wholly blameleſs, and which we ſhall produce ſuch Teſtimonials to juſtifie, as few of the Clergy of the Church can produce more, and ſuch as indeed no honeſt Man need deſire better.

If this Offence were as great as they would ſuppoſe it to be, it yet admits of much to be ſaid in Extenuation; as, 1. His Scruples of Conſcience, which would not permit him to continue the Exerciſe of the Common Prayer and Ceremonies, at leaſt not in all parts; 2. His officiating in a private Independent Chapel, in which, as before, he thought himſelf not oblig'd to an exact and compleat Conformity.

But, to oblige our Adverſary, we'll ſuppoſe it as heinous a Crime as they can pretend to, yet they will have enough to do

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to make it out that their Proceedings with him have been legal, rational, juſt, or humane: And for the Truth of this Suggeſtion, we refer to the Particulars, and freely make all unprejudic'd Members of their own Church the Judges: this Independency of the Chapel of *Wilney* will in ſome meaſure appear as follows.

Dr. *Gregg*, the Rector of *Upwell*, underſtanding that Mr. *Gill* omitted the Common Prayer, came to him, and told him, he was ſorry he (Mr. *Gill*) did not hold to his Principles, *&c.* and that he muſt therefore diſpoſſeſs him, and put in another Curate.

But Mr. *Gill* replied, He was not, nor ever had been, his Curate, and that it was not in his (Dr. *Gregg*'s) Power to diſpoſſeſs him; and therewith Mr. *Gill* ſhew'd the Doctor *his Authority for holding* the Place, which ſatisfied Dr. *Gregg*, ſo that he never offer'd him the leaſt Diſturbance afterward.

After ſome time Dr. *Gregg* died, and the Rectory of *Upwell* was given to one Mr. *Hubbart*; but he being a weakly Man, and in a deep Conſumption, he put in a Curate to Officiate; *viz.* one Mr. *Hugh James*.

This Mr. *James* finding his Pariſhioners flocking after Mr *Gill*, and but few caring to hear him, he expreſt his Diſpleaſure frequently in threatning and malicious Speeches againſt Mr. *Gill*; but the Incumbent Mr. *Hubbart* being a pious and peaceable Man, would not permit him to moleſt Mr. *Gill* during his Life: but this was not long; for, in about a Year and a half the ſaid Mr. *Hubbart*, the Rector of *Upwell*, died, and the Living was then given to the ſaid Curate, Mr. *Hugh James*.

As this Mr. *James* was a Man both of a different Temper and Character from his two honeſt Predeceſſors, he reſolv'd to ſtrain his Authority to the utmoſt, in order to diſpoſſeſs Mr. *Gill*.

The firſt Step he took in this Undertaking, was that about the

He comes to *Wilney* on a Lord's-day, and demands the Pulpit for the morning: Mr. *Gill* quietly permitted him to Preach; which he did, or rather Rail, at an uncommon rate, againſt Mr. *Gill*, bending his whole Diſcourſe to ſet out the heinous Sin of Omitting the holy Ceremonies, and telling Mr. *Gill*, from the Pulpit, that he ought to lie at the Chapel-door for three or four Months in Sackcloth, not daring to tread upon that Conſecrated Ground, begging the People to pray to God for him to forgive him that Sin: and to prove this, quoted, as we are told, ſeveral Popiſh Writers, but not one Text of Scripture as can be remembred; running on in ſuch a virulent Stile and unſuitable manner, that many of the Inhabitants could not bear to hear him, but went out of the Chapel.

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In the Afternoon there was no Sermon; for the ſaid Mr. *James*, Rector of *Upwell*, gave notice to the People to meet him after Dinner at an Alehouſe, where he Treated them with Liquor, and, as a place more proper for the Subject, preach'd the Second Part to his Morning Sermon, and beſtow'd another plentiful ſtorm of ill Language on Mr. *Gill*, deſiring the Inhabitants to ſet their Hands to a Letter, Petition, or Paper written to the *Biſhop*, in order to get Mr. *Gill* turn'd out: But they all unanimouſly refus'd him.

Being diſappointed in his Expectations, and having ſpent his Breath, as well as Ale, to no purpoſe, he went, as is reported, that very Night to *Ely*, and the next Week to *London*, to complain againſt Mr. *Gill* to the *Biſhop* of *Norwich*.

The Inhabitants of *Wilney* having diſcovered the Deſign, and being very loth to part with their Miniſter, importun'd Mr. *Gill* to draw up a Petition to the Lord *Biſhop* of *Norwich*, in order to prevent Mr. *James* from obtaining his malicious Deſign.

Mr. *Gill*, at the Deſire of his Congregation, did draw up the ſaid Petition, which was Sign'd by near 80 Hands of the Inhabitants of *Wilney*, and ſent up to the Lord *Biſhop* of *Norwich* (by the Poſt) who receiv'd it, as is ſuppoſed, before the ſaid Mr. *James* got thither.

Soon after the Arrival of the Petition, the Rector Mr. *James* came up to the *Biſhop*, and makes his Complaint againſt Mr. *Gill*, deſiring he might be diſmiſt: but his Lordſhip (as Mr. *James* himſelf has reported) anſwer'd, That he had heard a very good Report of the ſaid Mr. *Gill* from his Neighbourhood, That by the Right of the Place the Choice of a Miniſter was in the Inhabitants, and they teſtifying to his Behaviour, he could not diſmiſs him, or credit the Accuſation of one Man againſt the unanimous Voice of the whole Town, or Words to that effect. But, in ſhort, he rejected the Requeſt of Mr. *James*, and refus'd to Cenſure or Diſpoſſeſs Mr. *Gill*.

Mr. *James* finding himſelf diſappointed here, applies himſelf to the Spiritual Court at *Norwich*, and about *May* 1702 procures a Citation againſt Mr. *Gill*, to appear at *Norwich*. Mr. *Gill* obey'd the Citation very readily, appear'd at *Norwich*, and retain'd one Mr. *Batchelour* as his Proctor to manage his Defence.

Mr. *James* finding himſelf ſtill defeated, and not venturing to proceed in the *Biſhop*'s Court at *Norwich*, let drop his Citation, and ceas'd his Proſecution till about *Auguſt* 1702, when he ſerv'd Mr. *Gill* with another Citation.

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While this was depending, Mr. *Gill* going to *Cambridge* to Vote in the Election of Knights of the Shire, being poſſeſt of a Glebe to the Chapel as a Freehold, came into the Company of Sir *R---Jen—gs* Knight, who pretending Friendſhip to Mr. *Gill*, and his Neighbours who were there preſent, began to perſwade them to part quietly and lovingly; and to avoid continual Fewds, perſwaded Mr. *Gill* to quit the Chapel of *Wilney*, as a Place not worth ſo much Fewd and Conteſt; and upon his doing ſo, he promis'd *he would engage on the behalf of Mr. James*, the Suit in the Spiritual Court ſhould go no farther.

Mr. *Gill* conſented, and tho' much againſt the minds of the Inhabitants, agreed to leave *Wilney*, and depending on the Promiſe of Sir *R. Jen——gs*, omitted any regard of the Suit at *Norwich*; where, for want of his appearing, and *that worthy Knight breaking his word with him*, they proceeded to Excommunication againſt him.

Mr. *Gill* having thus quitted his Charge, had a Call from *Lincolnſhire* to a Diſſenting Congregation; which Call, after ſome time, he accepted, and accordingly remov'd to go thither. And here 'tis neceſſary to advertiſe the Reader, that Mr. *Gill* was ſo far from a haſty Flight, or any precipitance in his Remove, that he was near ten Weeks reſolving, removing, and ſettling his Family in *Lincolnſhire*.

In this Interval, and when it is plain theſe Gentlemen themſelves knew every day where to find Mr. *Gill*, and that he was frequently in the Town of *Wilney*, and never conceal'd himſelf or abſconded from any body, yet even then one of the moſt impudent Forgeries that can be paralell'd in this Age, was practis'd upon him; *viz.* To publiſh in the *Gazette* that the ſaid Mr. *Gill* was fled from Juſtice, having been detected of Forgery, *&c.*

And becauſe the bare-fac'd piece of Villainy ſhall admit no Miſconſtruction, we have here tranſmitted it to the World Word for Word as it ſtands in the *Gazette*, and as Care will ſpeedily be taken to make the proper Perſons account for it —— as follows:

Gazette, *Thurſday Nov.* 22. 1702. Advert.

WHereas Abraham Gill, *aged upward of* 30 *Years, middle-ſtatur'd, having ſome grey Hairs, ſometimes wearing a light Wig, of a ſanguine Complexion, bold and confident in Converſation, of a ſtrong Voice, and a North-country* Pronunciation, writing a tolerable Clerks hand *(as having been ſometime employed under an Attorney) but late-*

ly officiating as Curate at Welney *in the Isle of* Ely, *belonging to the Rectory of* Upwell *in* Norfolk, *has been detected of Forging Letters of Orders under the Hand and Episcopal Seal of the Right Reverend Father in God* Nicholas *Lord Bishop of* Chester, *and being for that and other wicked and scandalous Practices prosecuted in the Lord Bishop of* Norwich's *Consistory Court, is fled from Justice; all Clergy-men are to take notice not to entertain the said* Gill *as a Curate, or suffer him to perform any holy Office. And whoever gives notice of him, so as he may be Prosecuted, either to Mr.* Hugh James *Rector of* Upwell, *or to Mr.* Robert Clark *at the Consistory Court aforesaid in* Norwich, *shall have a good Reward for the same.*

Gazette, *Monday, March* 22. 1702.

ABraham Gill, *(aged upwards of 30 Years, middle-statur'd, some grey Hairs, wearing sometimes a light Wig, sometimes a darker, sanguine Complexion, bold and confident in Conversation, strong Voice, a North-Country Pronunciation, writing a Clerk-like Hand, as having been sometime employed under an Attorney, travelling the Country with a Woman and three or four Children) some time since forged Letters of Orders under the Hand and Episcopal Seal of the Lord Bishop of* Chester, *and for some time Officiated as Curate at* Welney *in the* Isle of Ely, *belonging to the Rectory of* Upwell *in* Norfolk, *until the Forgery was detected: for which, and other wicked and scandalous Practices, being Prosecuted in the Consistory Court at* Norwich, *he fled from Justice: Since which time he hath forged other Letters of Orders under the Bishop of* Ely's *Hand and Episcopal Seal, which were discovered to be Counterfeit upon his producing them at* Bollingbrook *in* Lincolnshire, *where he offered himself to be Curate; upon which, being again taken into Custody, he hath again made his Escape. All Clergy-men are therefore desired not to entertain the said* Gill *as a Curate, or suffer him to perform any Holy Office. And whoever gives notice of him (so as he may be secur'd) to Mr.* Hugh James, *Rector of* Upwell, *or to Mr.* Robert Clark, *Proctor in* Norwich, *shall have a good Reward for the same.*

Mr. *Gill* has been inform'd, this black piece of Malice had its birth in *Jesus College* in *Cambridge*, concerted there between Dr. *Cook*, Dr. *James*, Mr. *Lateward*, and their Confederates; but as he is not positive in that, he shall be glad of an Occasion to ask their Pardon for the Suggestion when they shall have purg'd themselves honourably from the Suspicion; and till then, thinks the

Grounds

Grounds he has for his Opinion are sufficient to clear him of any breach of Charity in believing it.

Mr. *Gill* was with his Family upon the Road from *Wilney* into *Lincolnshire*, when this Publication was first made; and coming to *Boston* on a Thanksgiving-Day, he rested, and went to the Dissenting Meeting to hear the Sermon; when, after Sermon, Mr. *Keeling* the Minister took him home to his House, and shew'd him the *Gazette* with the aforesaid Advertisement in it.

Mr. *Gill*, surpriz'd at the Reading of this *Gazette*, as he well might, immediately took Horse, leaving his Family in *Boston*, and resolv'd to go to *Cambridge*, where he expected to find out the bottom of the matter.

In this place it will be necessary to leave Mr. *Gill* a while, and the Reader may suppose him Travelling to *Cambridge*, with a Heart full of Trouble to see himself persecuted with so much Malice, and in hopes to find out his Enemies and their Design. And while he is on the Road, let us enquire upon what sorry and sandy Foundation all this Fabrick of Malice and Folly was erected, which will at last tend to lessen the Wonder at the Authors being confounded in their own Devices.

There had been a Man in *Derby* Jayl whose Name was *Gill (but, to avoid all possible Cavil, 'tis noted his Name was not* ABRAHAM GILL, *but* Stephen Clifford *alias* Gill. This Man having been Committed for Forging Holy Orders, and Counterfeiting the Coins, and Convicted of both, had broke out of the County Jayl at *Derby*, and was fled from Justice.

Mr. *James*, the Rector of *Upwell*, having been inform'd of this by his Attorney, immediately fixes it upon Mr. *Gill*, *and he must be the Man:* And to bring this Plot to a Head, takes the pains, about *June* 1702, to send to *Derby*, and informing the Jaylor there that his Prisoner was found, procures two Men to be sent from *Derby* to seize him, and so sure was he of his Game, that he openly gave it out that Mr. *Gill* had broke out of Jayl, and he should be hang'd.

Accordingly, the two Men sent by the Jaylor came over to *Wilney*, and pretending extraordinary Business with Mr. *Gill*, sent for him to an Ale-house in *Wilney*. Mr. *Gill* went boldly, as innocently, to them; and as they were Strangers, and had pretended Business, he wonder'd they discours'd with him of several Things, treated him courteously, paid the Reckoning, but never spoke a a word of any Business to him, only frequently whisper'd together, and left him.

The Truth of this after came out, and Mr. *Brookhouſe* Jaylor of *Derby* diſcovered the whole Affair to Mr. *Gill*, how and on what Pretence the two Men were procur'd to be ſent from *Derby*, whoſe Buſineſs with him was *to have apprehended him*; but the reaſon of their leaving him as they did, was, becauſe they found *he was not that Man.*

By this Diſcovery Mr. *Gill* came to know that Mr. *James*'s Aſſiſtant in this new Plot was one *Thomas Johnſon* an Attorney of *Outwell*, a Man of ill Fame and foul Practice, who poſitively affirm'd to the two Men that came from *Derby*, that Mr. *Gill* was the ſame Man that broke out of *Derby* Jayl.

This Deluſion might in ſome meaſure have pleaded in Excuſe of Mr. *James*, if his next Scene had not put him out of the reach of any rational Shelter or Defence; for, not content with this Defeat, he joyn'd with this infamous Attorney and one *Tho. Beart*, who ſince died in a moſt horrible manner, rotting away above ground. Theſe three went to one *John Marriot* of *Upwell*, and offer'd to give him 10 Pounds, or 10 Guineas, if he would ſwear that Mr. *Gill* was the ſame Man that had broke out of *Derby* Jayl for Forgery and Counterfeiting.

But here they were defeated again, and Heaven, the only Protector of Innocence, ſo blinded their Underſtanding, that they always made an ill Choice of their Inſtruments. Honeſt *John Marriot* told them plainly, he knew Mr. *Gill* was not the ſame Man; and ask'd them with what face they could deſire him to burthen his Conſcience with a falſe Oath, or ſell his Soul for 10 Guinea's?

By this time the Reader is to ſuppoſe Mr. *Gill* arriv'd at *Cambridge*, where having been above 14 Days, and all that while walking publickly about the Streets, and openly enquiring about the Notice in the *Gazette*, he receiv'd a Meſſage from the Vice-Chancellour of *Cambridge* to come to him to *Jeſus College*; whither, confirm'd and aſſur'd of his own Innocence, he freely went.

Coming to the College, Dr. *Cook* demanded his Name, which Mr. *Gill* readily told him, and the Place of his laſt Reſidence and Preaching; *viz.* at *Wilney*. Dr. *Cook* told him that he was deſcrib'd in the *Gazette*, and upon the Advertiſement therein he muſt ſend him to Jayl; which he accordingly did on the 24th of *March* to the *Tolbooth* in *Cambridge*, by a *Mittimus* in the following Words, or to that effect:

To

To the Keeper of the Tolbooth Goal *at* Cambridge, *these.*

I *Send you herewith the Body of* Abraham Gill, *whom I charge you to keep till diſcharg'd by due Courſe of Law.*

Sign'd Will. Cook.

Thus, without any Proof that he was the Man mention'd in the *Gazette*, without any Oath, or any Crime alledg'd, Mr. *Gill* was Committed to Priſon by the worthy Dr. *Cook*; of which 'tis preſum'd he may hear again in a different manner than this.

Nor was the ſending him to Priſon the End of their Malice, but as ſoon as he came thither he had heavy Irons laid upon him, and was fetter'd like a Fellon or a Highway-man.

At the General Quarter-Seſſions Mr. *Gill* being call'd, and Dr. *Cook* ſitting on the Bench, the Dr. told him, Mr. *Gill*, they had nothing to charge him with: He told them, Then they had done him a great deal of Wrong to keep him in Cuſtody ſo long, and treat him ſo hardly, and loading him with Irons: And as they had now nothing againſt him, he hoped they never would; and therefore pray'd they would Diſcharge him.

Notwithſtanding all this, they remanded him to Priſon. Dr. *Cook* alledg'd he had a Letter from Mr. *James*, Rector of *Upwell*, full of Crimes againſt Mr. *Gill*; in which Letter, it ſeems, he deſir'd Mr. *Gill* might be kept cloſe Priſoner till the next Quarter Seſſions.

In Obedience to this Command of Mr. *James*, Dr. *Cook* endeavour'd to keep Mr. *Gill* in Priſon: but the Barbarity of this Treatment appearing ſo exceeding great, and the Action ſo foul that the Country began to talk of it, ſome Gentlemen of the Country having ſpoken of it to Dr. *Cook*'s Diſadvantage, which coming to his Ears, he was at laſt prevail'd upon to accept of Bail for Mr. *Gill*, two eminent Freeholders of that County of 80 *l. per ann.* each offering to be his Bail.

The Bail being ſuch as could not be objected againſt, *The Dr. let him go*, binding his Bail in 60 *l.* each, and himſelf in 120 *l.* to appear at the Quarter-Seſſions.

This Uſage of Mr. *Gill*, with the Fury and Barbarity of their Curate and Rector, had ſo wrought upon the Inhabitants of *Upwell*, together with the known Innocence of their Miniſter, that it fill'd them with juſt Prejudices, and they unanimouſly invited Mr. *Gill* to come and Preach to them as a Congregation Diſſenting from the

Church;

Church; which he did, duly Licencing the Place in the Archdeacon's Court at *Norwich*, and duly Qualifying himself according to Law.

From whence the Author of these Sheets humbly observes, and recommends it to the Consideration of the Clergy of the Church of *England*, Whether such unjust and cruel Treatment of their Fellow-Christians, Neighbours and Brethren, is the Way to confirm the People in their Adherence to the Church of *England*; or whether they do not rather Wound the Church, drive their Parishioners from her, fill them with Prejudices, and encrease the Number of the Dissenters in this Nation.

Mr. *Gill* being thus settled among his old People, and knowing that he was to appear at the Quarter Sessions, where he had good reason to expect all the foul Usage his Enemies were capable of, and where he saw their Power was but too great, was advised to remove it by *Certiorari* to the *Queens-bench*; which he did accordingly, the *Certiorari* being allow'd in Court, and the Fees of it paid by Mr. *Gill*.

But Mr. *James*, and Mr. *Lateward* the Curate hearing of this *Certiorari*, they, or one of them, went to *Cambridge* at the Assize; and applying themselves to my Lord Chief Justice *Holt* by the means of Dr. *Cook* and Dr. *James*, they procur'd a *Habeas Corpus* to remove Mr. *Gill* to *Norwich* Jayl, pretending they could prove Matter of Fact against him there.

Accordingly he was Committed to *Norwich* Jayl for Felony, Forgery, Trespass, Contempt, and other high Crimes and Misdemeanours.

Here the said Mr. *Gill* lay till the Assizes; and still his Enemies being able to bring nothing against him, he mov'd, by his Council, to be Discharg'd, and was Discharg'd accordingly, by Order of the Court; which Order is there to be seen upon Record.

Here he was credibly inform'd Mr. *James* and Mr. *Lateward* striving by some other Machinations and Conspiracies to have continued Mr. *Gill* in Jayl to the next Assizes, receiv'd a severe Reprimand from the Lord Bishop of *Norwich* for their unjust and inhumane Treatment of Mr. *Gill*; and that his Lordship threatned them with Suspension upon that account.

Also that Mr. *Clark*, the Register of the Spiritual Court at *Norwich*, being enquir'd of concerning his Name being put into the Advertisement in the *Gazette*, as, that he would give a Reward for the Apprehending Mr. *Gill*; declared it was done without his

Privity

Privity or Consent, and that it was a meer genuine Forgery; that he knew nothing of it, but that it was as strange and surprizing to find his Name there, as it could be to Mr. *Gill* to see his there.

Thus being return'd to his People, Mr. *James* and Mr. *Lateward* whom henceforward, in Charity to them, I shall conceal under the Title of the Conspirators, threatned him, that if he presumed yet to Preach there, he should be sent to Prison again: But he continuing to do his Duty, it remains to examine how punctual they were to their Words with him.

About the 13th of *April* 1704, one *Thomas Pitchford*, Constable of *Wilney*, serv'd a Warrant on Mr. *Gill*, under the Hand of *Tho. Edwards* Esq; a Justice of the Peace for the *Isle of Ely*; the Warrant requiring the said Constable to bring Mr. *Gill* before him *&c.* the 20th of the same Month at *Wisbich*.

The Constable having serv'd his Warrant, took Mr. *Gill*'s Word for his Appearing; but Mr. *Lateward*, one of the Conspirators, came in a great Passion, and railing at the Constable, told him he must keep Mr. *Gill* close Prisoner till his Appearance, for that then he should certainly go to Jayl; and if he went away from him, he *the Constable* should go to Jayl in his room, and more ill Language to the like effect: however, the Constable still took Mr. *Gill*'s Word for his Appearance.

On the 20th of *April*, being a Sessions, the said Mr. *Gill* appear'd, according to his Promise, at *Wisbich*, where was present 7 or 8 Justices, several Gentlemen, some Clergy-men, and the Conspirators.

Mr. *L*—— one of *the Conspirators*, call'd the Constable to bring up *Gill* his Prisoner: upon which Mr. *Gill* readily appear'd. The *Conspirators* immediately told their Tale, and giving Mr. *Gill* base and scurrilous Language, according to their particular Talent, which abounds that way, they inform'd the Justices that Mr. *Gill* bred great Disturbances in the Parish by a Conventicle, as Conventicles did all *England* over. *Which, by the way, might be the only Truth they spoke:* for it seems by these very Words he bred no more Disturbance with his Conventicle than other Ministers did with theirs; *ergo*, they should be all serv'd so. *Shortest Way for that.*

Mr. *Edwards*, one of the Justices, taking up the Cause, told Mr. *Gill* he was inform'd he kept an unlawful Assembly or Conventicle at *Upwell*, and gave him a great deal of rough and threatning Language.

Mr. *Gill*, with Calmneſs and Reſpect replied, He own'd he kept a Meeting for Religious Worſhip at *Upwell* in the County of *Norfolk*, but, that it was no unlawful Aſſembly; for the Place was Licenſed according to Law, and he had qualified himſelf as the Law Directs: and therefore hoped he did not deſerve to receive ſuch Abuſe in that place.

The Juſtice then Demanded to ſee the Licence by which the ſaid Mr. *Gill* held the Meeting; which he producing, both the *Conſpirators* ſaid in open Court it was Forged: and whether the Court believed them or no, is uncertain, or what other reaſon they had for it will be enquir'd in another place, but they immediately made a *Mittimus* and Committed Mr. *Gill* to the Jayl in *Wisbich* —— for Forging a Licence, and Preaching in a Conventicle. And taking the Licence from him, they refus'd to reſtore it him.

They demanded indeed Bail, but gave him no leave to find it, refuſing to let him ſtir out of the place: But Mr. *Gill* may, without Detriment to his Cauſe allow all their Pretenſions of Bail for his Behaviour, ſince the Treatment he had received from them was ſuch, as he might be ſure whoever he had brought to be his Bail ſhould be brought into equal Trouble; and for that Reaſon he reſolv'd to embroil none of his Friends.

And being ſenſible of no Crime for which he ought by the Law to be bound to his Behaviour, he was advis'd not to offer any Bail, and refer it to the Law ſtill to decide whether—— it could be juſtly demanded.

The Wiſdom as well as Juſtice of theſe Magiſtrates is very remarkable alſo here, that they ſhould know no better than to Commit a Man in the *Iſle of Ely* for a Fact pretended to be committed in the County of *Norfolk*; all which will help to their Conſolation when they ſhall come to anſwer for it before a Court and Judges that underſtand the Law.

And as I undertook at firſt to prove every thing as I went along, the following Affidavit is an undoubted Teſtimony of the Truth of this laſt part of the Tragedy; *viz.* of the *Conſpirators* charging him with Forgery, which they could not pretend to prove, and their treating him with baſe ſcurrilous Language, tho' all of them are pleas'd to deny it upon Oath.

Mr. *Cole*'s Affidavit.

JOſeph Cole *of* Upwell, *in the County of* Norfolk, *Gent. maketh Oath, That* Abraham Gill *of* Welney *in the* Iſle of Ely

Ely *and County of* Cambridge, *is a Preacher to a Congregation of Her Majesty's Protestant Dissenting Subjects in* Upwell *aforesaid, having been a Preacher in the said Parish of* Welney *for several Years last past, and that he is now, and hath all the time, been well approved of his Congregation. And this Deponent farther saith, That on or about the* 20th *day of* April *last past, he saw the said Mr.* Gill *brought before Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace at* Wisbich *in the said* Isle of Ely, *by vertue of a Warrant to answer the Complaint of Mr.* Hugh James *Rector of* Upwell *aforesaid; and that at that time there was one Mr.* Lateward, *Curate to the said Mr.* James, *and Mr.* James *in presence; and that the said Mr.* Lateward *commanded the Constable (who then had the said Mr.* Gill *in Custody) to bring up* Gill *his Prisoner, which the Constable did; when and where Mr.* James *and Mr.* Lateward *alledged, That the said Mr.* Gill *kept an unlawful Conventicle. And Mr.* Gill, *to justifie the keeping of a lawful Meeting for Worship of God, produced his Licence; whereupon the said Mr.* James *and Mr.* Lateward *affirmed, That the said Mr.* Gill *had forged the Licence, and they gave the said Mr.* Gill *very base, unbecoming, and scurrilous Language, which Mr.* Gill, *to my Knowledge, did not deserve, nor did it become them to utter; and afterwards, upon this way of Complaint, Mr.* Gill *was committed to the Jayl in* Wisbich *aforesaid. And this Deponent verily believes, That the said Mr.* James *and Mr.* Lateward *have maliciously designed to ruin and undo the said Mr.* Gill *and his Family, consisting of a Wife and four small Children; for they have, by several barbarous ways of Prosecution, utterly reduced the said Mr.* Gill *and his Family to Poverty. And this Deponent verily believes, that the said Mr.* Gill *never gave either Mr.* James *or Mr.* Lateward *any cause of Offence, nor did they, or ever could they, prove any cause of their malicious Prosecution. But this Deponent verily believes, that the cause of this Malice of Mr.* James *and Mr.* Lateward *against Mr.* Gill, *was because Mr.* Gill *Preached twice every Lord's-day, and they but once; and Mr.* Gill *was more diligent in his Ministry, and more charitable to the Poor, and better approved of in his Place than they the said Mr.* James *and Mr.* Lateward *are. And this Deponent farther saith, That Mr.* Gill *hath been a Freeholder in the said Parish for several Years till*

about the 29th of September 1702, *and that* James Holms *of* Welney *(since deceased) held in Farm under Mr.* Gill *for several Years, a parcel of Land of Mr.* Gill's *Freehold of the yearly Rent of* 41. 10 s. *or thereabouts; and that Mr.* Gill *had other Lands besides, and lived in good Fame and Plenty amongst his Neighbours; and he the said Mr.* Gill *is greatly beloved in the whole Parish by all but a few that dare not displease the said Mr.* James *and Mr.* Lateward.

Joseph Cole.

In this Condition Mr. *Gill* remain'd a close Prisoner without Bail till the General Quarter-Sessions, which was about five Days; when, he expected to be call'd and lawfully charg'd with some matter of Misdemeanour, or else to be discharg'd.

But now the Plot was ripe for Execution, and at the Quarter-Sessions he was omitted, and never call'd at all.

The Assizes follow'd in two Days more, *viz. April* 26. 1704. when he design'd to move for his Discharge, not doubting but he should find Justice there, as he had before at *Norwich*.

But the Design was calculated *to disappoint him here too*, and now the black Scene opened; for on the said 26th of *April*, being the first Day of the Assizes, the *Conspirators* had procur'd two Justices, in Concert with themselves, to come to *Wisbich*, *tho' above* 20 *Miles out of their own Division*.

The Names of these worthy Gentlemen are, *(for they deserve to be recorded) David Rowland* Esq; and *Francis Fern* Esq; and Clerk; for this Gentleman is both Clergyman and Magistrate, of whom we shall say no more, till Justice thinks fit to take Cognisance of them, and treat them as they deserve.

These Gentlemen, who now made up the number of the *Conspirators* to be four, brought with them one Captain *Marshal*, an Officer in Colonel *Lutteril*'s Regiment of *Marines*, in order to Impress, List, and Carry away this innocent Man as a Souldier, by Virtue of the Law for Listing Vagabonds.

There were several Officers in the Town who wou'd have been very willing to have rais'd Men, and who stay'd there for that purpose; but the Country had rung too loud of the Injury done this poor Man, so that no Officer that knew the Circumstance, could be imagin'd *Villain enough* to confederate; but this Gentleman having the Word of a Justice of Peace, and *a Man of God made a Magistrate*, might the more easily be imposed upon.

Upon

Upon the Arrival of these Gentlemen, Mr. *Gill* was sent for out of Prison to the Sign of the *Bell* in *Wisbich*. All the *Conspirators* being present, the Church Justice began with him in base and villainous Language, as unbecoming his Commission as his Gown, calling him *Disturber of the Country*, and *Sawcy Fellow* for answering for himself; told him he was *a Drunkard*, *a Swearer*, and a great deal to the same purpose; that he rais'd a Conventicle in Mr. *James*'s Parish, Impair'd the Congregation at the Church, which was a thing of bad Consequence, and *ought to be suppress*; and that he was not fit to live in the Country, but to Serve Her Majesty, and that therefore he should go for a Souldier.

This Justice *Fern*, being justly asham'd of this Treatment, is pleas'd upon his Oath to deny giving any ill Language: and therefore, to make out that Particular as we go, take the following Affidavit of an honest Inhabitant of *Upwell*, who heard it.

Cornelius Neale's Affidavit.

COrnelius Neale *of* Upwell, *in the Isle of* Ely, *and County of* Cambridge, *Carpenter, maketh Oath, That he, at the time of* Abraham Gill's *being Impress for a Soldier, to wit, on or about the 25th day of* April, A. D. 1704, *did see the said* Abraham Gill *in Custody in a Room at the Sign of the* Bell *at* Wisbich, *where was* John Bellamy *Esq; and* Francis Ferne, *Clerk, Justice of Peace for the said Isle, and another Gentleman, who, as this Deponent was informed, was* David Rowland *Esq; another Justice of Peace for the said Isle, who, after some base, scurrilous, and hasty Words by them given to the said* Abraham Gill, *then right or wrong ordered that he should go into Her Majesty's Service for a Souldier; and then caused the Officer to tender him Listing-money; after which, they ordered the said Officer to read the Articles of War to him: and this Deponent did see the said* Abraham Gill *some time after with the rest of the Impress Men.*

Cornelius Neale.

There was present another Justice of the Peace, one *John Bellamy* Esq; who at first vigorously oppos'd these Gentlemen; told them he found Mr. *Gill* had a Licence, and he verily believ'd it was a good one; that if he (Mr. *Gill*) was guilty of any Crimes, he ought to be Tryed for them; and, that now was a good time to do

it in, the Judges being in Town, and the Aſſizes begun, and adviſ'd them to conſider if their Authority extended to Preſſing him for a Souldier.

This wholſome Advice (*which they may have leiſure to repent they did not accept of*) they over-rul'd: They flew into ſome Heat at Mr. *Bellamy*'s arguing for him, and told him, tho' they were not in their own Diviſion, yet they were Juſtices there as well as he, and expected that they had a Power to act all over the Iſle; and if they had any Power they would try it, for *the ſaid* Gill *ſhould be Impreſt*, and ſent for a Souldier, and they would anſwer it — At which Mr. *Bellamy* was over-ruled, and joyn'd with them.

Mr. *Gill* told them, That beſides his Profeſſion, which he ſuppos'd exempted him from ſuch an Inſult as that, he had two Qualifications expreſly excepted in the Act, and which legally forbid them what they now purpos'd to do — Firſt, That he was *a Freeholder of England*; and Secondly, That he was *a Freeman of a Corporation*; both which were expreſly nam'd in the Act of Parliament, as Qualifications excepted.

Juſtice *Bellamy* urg'd again, That theſe were material Objections, and ask'd him, Where he was a Freeholder, and for How much? He told them he was a Freeholder to the Value of 10 *l. per Ann.* Land of Inheritance in the County of *Lancaſter*, where he was born, and a Freeman of the Corporation of *Wigan*.

Mr. *Bellamy* urg'd again, that he ſhould be remanded to Priſon till they could ſend to the Place to be inform'd —— But the Plot was otherwiſe laid, and they reſolv'd he ſhould go; ſo they call'd Captain *Marſhal*, and order'd him to give him 20 *s.* which Mr. *Gill* refus'd: then they order'd his Name to be entred in a Certificate for Impreſt Men, and the Juſtices Sign'd it, and Delivered him over to the Capt. and Mr. *Fern* in particular call'd to the Souldiers, and bid them tear his Band off, and take him along with them, and uſe him *Severely*, (*in ſo many Words.*) Which Command the Souldiers took care to execute; for they carried him into a large Room crowded with Preſt Men, where he had nothing but Straw to lie on. And in this Poſture and Place he remain'd, ſitting up in his Cloaths and Boots for ſix or ſeven days, and then was oblig'd to march on foot in his Boots, Riding-Coat, *&c.* to *Downham* 12 Miles, and from thence to *Ely* 16, and thence to *Cambridge* 10 or 12.

For the Proof of this Matter, and how cunningly and induſtriouſly theſe Men acted, ſome to get out of the Room, and avoid ſigning the Certificate of his Impreſſing, and others to ſink and con-

conceal the Certificate it ſelf, in order to ſmother an Action they were juſtly aſham'd of, the following Affidavits are neceſſary to be examin'd.

CApt. Henry Marſhal, *of Col.* Alexander Lutterel's *Regiment of Marines, maketh Oath, That in purſuance of a late Act of Parliament,* John Browne, Thomas Gibſon, *and* Abraham Gill, *on the twenty ſixth day of* April *laſt paſt, were brought before Mr.* Rowland, *Mr.* Pearſon, *Mr.* Bellamy, *and Mr.* Fern, *four of Her Majeſty's Juſtices of the Peace for the Iſle of* Ely, *in the County of* Cambridge, *who thought them, the ſaid* Browne, Gibſon, *and* Gill, *to be proper Perſons to ſerve as Soldiers under Her Majeſty Queen* Ann: *Thereupon (as the ſaid Act directs) a Tender was made by this Deponent to them, the ſaid* Browne, Gibſon, *and* Gill, *of twenty Shillings each, in the Preſence of the aforeſaid Juſtices, which the former accepted, and the laſt refuſed: And this Deponent farther ſaith, That the Certificate for the ſaid three Soldiers, was lodged in the Hands of one of the Clerks, belonging to one of the aforeſaid Juſtices, in order to be regiſtred, but is ſince loſt or miſlaid. And the ſaid Clerk, in whoſe Hands it was ſo lodged, alledgeth, That he left it with the ſaid Mr.* Bellamy, *who owned to this Deponent that he had a Copy of the ſaid Certificate, but deny'd that he had the Original.*

H. Marſhal.

This Affidavit charging ſome of the Clerks with the Certificate, we ſhall trace it thither; and firſt Juſtice *Bellamy* owns he had a Copy, but denies that he had the Original.

In the next place, the Clerk to Juſtice *Colvill* ſwears, That in his Preſence all the Juſtices agreed Mr. *Gill* ſhould be liſted, and that he ſhould be delivered to Capt. *Marſhal*; and ordered him to draw up the Certificate. which he did, but did not ſee it ſign'd: the Copy of which is as below,

JOHN Rawlett *of* Thorney, *in the Iſle of* Ely, *and County of* Cambridge, *Clerk to* Ralph Peirſon, *Eſq; one of Her Majeſty's Juſtices of the Peace for the ſaid Iſle, maketh Oath, That at a Meeting of ſeveral Juſtices of the Peace for the ſaid Iſle, and in particular of this Deponent's Maſter,* Joſiah Colvill,

David

David Rowland, *Esquires*, Francis Fern, *Clerk*, *and* John Bellamy, *Esquires*; *on or about the seven and twentieth Day of* April *last, it was agreed by the said Justices, That* Abraham Gill *of* Welneth, *in the said Isle of* Ely, *who was then examined before the said Justices, should be listed for a Soldier, as being a Person (according to their Opinion) liable thereto, according to the late Act of Parliament for raising Recruits for the Land Forces and Marines; and that the said* Gill *should be delivered accordingly to Capt.* Henry Marshal, *of the Honourable Col.* Lutterel's *Regiment of Marines, who was then present, and tend'red the said* Abraham Gill *twenty Shillings for Listing Money, in this Deponent's Presence: And this Deponent saith, That the said Justices ordered this Deponent to draw up a Certificate of the same, according to the Directions of the said Act of Parliament: The Articles of War against Mutiny and Desertion being also then read by the said Capt.* Marshal *to the said* Abraham Gill. *And this Deponent did accordingly draw up a Certificate; as also of the listing of* Thomas Gibson, *and* John Browne, *both of* Well, *in the same Isle; which at the Desire of the said Capt.* Marshal *was not sealed that Night, because he expected more Soldiers, and designed to put them all into one and the same Certificate the Day following. And this Deponent saith, that the Paper hereunto annexed is the Draught of the said Certificate; but this Deponent going away in the Morning following is not acquainted with what was farther done on the Premises, only that he left a Copy of the said Certificate behind him with the said Mr.* Bellamy.

John Rawlet.

IN *Pursuance of an Act of Parliament made in the Second and Third Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lady* Anne, *by the Grace of God, of* England, Scotland, France, *and* Ireland, *Queen, Defender of the Faith,* &c. *for raising Recruits of the Land Forces, Marines,* &c.

We, whose Hands and Seals are hereto set, three of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said Isle, *do hereby certify, That the following Persons we listed according to the said Act by Captain* Henry Marshal, *in the Honourable Colonel* Lutterel's *Regiment of Marines; who did make Tender of twenty Shillings to the Persons hereafter mentioned, which they accepted*

cepted of; *and that the ſaid* Captain *did read the Articles of War againſt Mutiny and Diſſertion to them in our Preſence.*

Tho. Gibſon *of* Well *in the ſaid* Iſle.
John Brown *de eadem.*
Abraham Gill *late de eadem.*

Theſe three Men above written were liſted before us.

To return to Mr. *Gill.* The Fateagne of this violent March reduc'd him to a very miſerable Condition; his Feet and Legs gall'd and ſwell'd with his Boots, and his Blood, as may be ſuppoſed, ſurfeited and heated with unuſual Force beyond his Strength.

Thus you have the Hiſtory of his Delivery over to the Soldiers; with whom, and in the Condition as above, he came to *Cambridge*; where he was arreſted for Debt, and ſo by one Misfortune delivered from another.

They uſed ſome Attempts to clear him from this Arreſt; but the Debt appearing to be real, and too much for them to diſcharge, being 27 *l.* 9 *s.* 6 *d.* they were forc'd to leave him in the *Tollbooth* Priſon at *Cambridge.*

The Conſpirators, who concluded their Work was done, and Mr. *Gill* carried clear off, were under no ſmall Diſappointment when they heard he was gotten out of their Hands: and tho' they could not but know where he was, yet, in purſuit of their old Deſign, they iſſued Hue and Cry to apprehend him as a Deſerter from the Queen's Service, and Mr. *Fern* the *Church-Juſtice* ſign'd the Hue and Cry. This failing, they iſſued a ſpecial private Warrant to Conſtables at *Upwell*, *Wilney*, and *Mavey*, to make ſearch for him, and ſtill *the reverend Mr.* Fern's *Hand was to this alſo*, as by the Warrant now ſecured and remaining with the Conſtables of *Wilney* will appear.

It was now high time for Mr. *Gill* to take Sanctuary in the Law; and going to Counſel in the Caſe, he was adviſed to move in the *Queen's Bench* for a *Habeas Corpus*, to diſcharge him from enrolling or liſting in the Army: which he did, and obtain'd it accordingly; and alſo a Rule of Court for all the *Conſpirators* to ſhow Cauſe, *&c.*

And now theſe Gentlemen having run their Length, the Tables were turn'd, and the Time began to come when they muſt render an Acount to her Majeſty and the Law for all this Oppreſſion of her Subjects, Contempt of her Authority, and Abuſe of the Power put into their Hands by the Laws.

The

The *Conſpirators* appear'd at the *Queen's Bench* Court in *Weſtminſter*, and mov'd for Time, and ſeveral Motions being made alternately, in order to bring in Affidavits; at laſt they found themſelves ſo preſs'd by the Courſe of the Law, that they were obliged to have Recourſe to their old ſtock of Villany they had work'd upon before, and form'd a ſecond Conſpiracy to bring Mr. *Gill* into Contempt of the Court; the detecting whereof will conclude this part of our Hiſtory: and the future Rewards Juſtice will beſtow upon them for theſe things, are reſerv'd to their proper Seaſon; and may ſerve for a Second Part of this Account.

After ſeven Weeks Impriſonment at *Cambridge*, Mr. *Gill* having made up matters with his Creditor was releas'd, and went home to his Family at *Welney*, ſhowing himſelf publickly, and Preaching every Week to his Congregation as uſual; for now the *Conſpirators* ſaw he was out of their power, and whatever they did they muſt expect to account for.

At laſt they mov'd the Court that Mr. *Gill* might appear in Perſon to accuſe them, which was granted, and appointed to be on the 4th of *July* laſt.

Mr. *Gill*'s Attorney ſent him Notice of this Order, and he immediately went for *London*; and ſetting out on the 3d of *July*, in order to his appearing in the Court, with one Mr. *Tokelove* in his Company, he was arreſted on the Road about 6 Miles from his own Houſe, by one *Betts* a Bailiff, in an Iſland Warrant, at the Suit of one *John Smith* of *Downham*.

Betts the Bailiff holding him to Bail, carry'd Mr. *Gill* to *Maypole*, a little Village, 10 Miles from his own Houſe, Mr. *Gill* being exceedingly ſurpriz'd at this Arreſt, knowing the Conſequence of his Diſappointment, perſwaded the Bayliff to go back with him, 5 Miles to *Maney*, where he got ſome Friends to be his Bail.

This ended the Trifle of the Arreſt; but the *Conſpirators* End was anſwered by it; for by that time Bail was given it was Afternoon, and there was no poſſibility of Mr. *Gill*'s being in Court at the time appointed, which was the next Morning, being not able to ride all night, nor to ride ſo hard as to reach to *London* time enough, (ſending Mr. *Tokelove*, who was then with him, forward to *Cambridge*, to make Oath of what had paſs'd, which he did accordingly, as will appear by his Affidavit) being above 60 Miles, *ſo he went back to his own Houſe.*

The Court reſented his Default, and the *Conſpirators* took Care to have it improv'd to his Diſadvantage: But before we come to relate the Conſequences of the Contempt in Court, 'tis proper to

examine

examine the Contrivances of this Arreſt, and ſome ſubſequent Management of the *Conſpirators*.

When *Betts* the Bayliff firſt arreſted Mr. *Gill*, he told him, That this was a Choak Pare for him, and was procur'd by Mr. *Lateward*, *one of the Conſpirators*, to prevent his appearing at *London*.

This was ſpoken in the hearing of Mr. *Tokelove*, who was then with Mr. *Gill*, as appears by the following Affidavit.

RIchard Tokelove, *of* Upwell, *in the County of* Norfolk, *Yeoman, maketh Oath, That he, this Deponent, came to Mr.* Abraham Gill's *Houſe at* Wellney, *in the Iſle of* Ely, *and County of* Cambridge, *on the third Day of* July, Ann. Dom. *One Thouſand Seven Hundred and Four, very early that Morning, and found him at home; and that the ſaid Mr.* Gill, *nor this Deponent, did not that Day Morning ſee nor ſpeak with* John Betts *the Bayliff, till he overtook and arreſted the ſaid Mr.* Gill *on the* Bank Road, *ſix Miles from home, or thereabonts, he this Deponent, and the ſaid Mr.* Gill *being going for* London: *And this Deponent doth farther ſay, That the ſaid* John Betts *did then declare, That the ſaid Mr.* Gill *was arreſted by the Procurement of one Mr.* Lateward, *intending for to ſtay his Journey from attending the Court.*

Richard Tokelove.

Betts the Officer, a Man capable of being moulded for the purpoſe of the *Conſpirators*, not remembring what he had ſaid at the time of the Arreſt, chang'd his Note quickly after.

For the *Conſpirators* finding the Plot had taken Effect, and that they had effectually prevented Mr. *Gill* from appearing at the Court; the next Step was to make the World believe this was a Contrivance of his own, and ſo throw their own Villany upon Mr. *Gill*.

Accordingly they report, That Mr. *Gill* had cauſed himſelf to be arreſted, in order to get an excuſe for his not going to *London*, not daring to appear at the *Queen's Bench Bar*.

And now that their Engine may appear as black as themſelves, this Mr. *Betts* the Bayliff is made to ſwear.

1. That he *Betts* had a Letter from Mr. *Smith* the Plaintiff at *Downham*, to him with Orders to arreſt Mr. *Gill*; and that this Letter was of Mr. *Gill*'s own writing, but ſign'd by Mr. *Smith*.

2. He ſwears, That he received two ſeveral Letters from Mr. *Gill*, directed to himſelf, deſiring him to arreſt him that *Monday*

Morning that he was to go to *London*, in order to ſtop his Journey.

3. He ſwears, Mr. *Gill* call'd him up that Morning, in order to be arreſted by him; and that he brought him a blank Warrant, *&c.*

Tho' this *Comi-Tragedy* will be beſt related after this Wretch has been brought to Juſtice, with his Procurers, the *Conſpirators*; yet to finiſh this Relation, 'tis neceſſary to acquaint the World how this *hard-mouth'd Swearer* is confronted.

Mr. *Tokelove* ſwears as before, That he *Betts* voluntarily declared at the time of the Arreſt, That it was *procur'd by Mr. Lateward*; but this, 'tis ſuppoſed, was before he was made privy to the Conſpiracy; and being afterward let into the Secret, forgetting what he had ſaid, confirm'd the World in his own known Character; and verify'd the Truth of that old Saying, *Oportet Mendacem eſſe Memoriam.*

2. Mr. *Smith* of *Downham* the Plaintiff owns, He gave leave to Mr. *Lateward* to order Mr. *Gill* to be arreſted; but ſwears, He was deſir'd ſo to do by an importunate Letter from Mr. *Lateward* as *per* his Affidavit appears, and being threatn'd in Caſe of Refuſal.

JOHN Smith *of* Downham, *in the County of* Norfolk, *Yeoman, maketh Oath, That he this Deponent received a Letter by a Meſſenger from Mr.* Lateward, *Curate at* Welney; *to the beſt of this Deponent's Remembrance the Letter bares Date about the latter end of* June *laſt: The Purport and Meaning of the Letter was to deſire, and indeed ſtrongly to urge, him this Deponent to give the ſaid Mr.* Lateward *Orders to arreſt Mr.* Abraham Gill, *Miniſter to a Diſſenting Congregation at* Upwell; *and the Letter urged, That Mr.* Gill *muſt be arreſted* Monday *Morning next after the Date thereof, by one or two a Clock in the Morning, to prevent Mr.* Gill's *attending at* London, *at a Hearing between Mr.* Hugh James, *Rector of* Upwell, *and Mr.* Gill, *and then Mr.* James *could have an Advantage againſt Mr.* Gill: *The Letter promiſed, That his this Deponent's Kindneſs ſhould be well gratify'd if this Deponent anſwered the Requeſt, elſe Mr.* Lateward *and his Intereſt would take it unkindly, and this Deponent ſhould looſe their Reſpect; upon which this Deponent gave order in writing by Mr.* Lateward's *Meſſenger to arreſt Mr.* Gill, *and uſe their Pleaſure according to Law; and this Deponent is well ſatisfied they did order Mr.* Gill *to be arreſted, and kept in Cuſtody about ten Miles from home,*

home, in his Journey towards London. *And this Deponent is credibly informed, That the Bayliff, one* Betts, *hath been often feasted, and well fed by Mr.* Lateward; *and hath constantly kept Mr.* Lateward *Company, and rode about with him ever since. And this Deponent farther saith, That he saw Mr.* Gill *upon the six and twentieth of this instant* October, *who is very sick, and hath been so for a long time, and is very weak, unfit for going abroad, and liker for Death than Life.*

John Smith.

3. Mr. *Tokelove* swears, He was with Mr. *Gill* early in the Morning the same Day he was arrested, and found him at Home, and never parted with him till he was arrested; and that therefore it was impossible he should call at *Bett's* House, as *Betts* swears he did, to have him arrest him: And because Mr. *Tokelove's* Affidavit is very full, and a Confirmation of several things already advanced here, we refer to the Copy of it duly attested, as follows.

RIchard Tokelove *of* Upwell, *in the County of* Norfolk, *Yeoman, maketh Oath, That Mr.* Abraham Gill *of* Welney, *in the Isle of* Ely, *and County of* Cambridge, *did never serve at* Welney *Chappel as Curate to Dr.* Gragge, *or to any one else, to his this Deponent's Knowledge; but was a Preacher elected and chose by the Congregation and Feoffees, in a time when the Chappel was vacant; and this Deponent's Opinion is, That it was in the said Feoffees and Congregation's Power to elect their Minister. And this Deponent farther saith, That the said Mr.* Gill *was a Freeholder for several Years in* Welney, *and lived in good Fame and Plenty all the time of two pious and sober Rectors of the said Parish; and was well approved of both for Doctrine, Charity, and Behaviour. And this Deponent farther saith, That since Mr.* James *and Mr.* Lateward *have been so malicious against Mr.* Gill, *he is elected and chosen a Preacher to a Dissenting Congregation of Protestants in* Upwell *aforesaid; and is able in Doctrine religious, and of sober Life and Conversation, and highly approved of with his Congregation, and most of his Neighbours, and with most his Acquaintance; but Mr.* James *our present Rector at* Upwell, *and Mr.* Lateward *his Curate (as this Deponent very believes) envying the said Mr.* Gill, *and maliciously designing to ruin him and his Fa-*

wily hath ſcandalouſly, maliciouſly, and without Cauſe, ſpread abroad evil, unjuſt, and undeſerving Characters of the ſaid Mr. Gill, which, by Strangers and Perſons remote and Ill-wiſhers to the Diſſenting Party, may perhaps be believed as coming from ſuch Authors; and this Deponent farther ſaith, That it is his Opinion that by inſinuating Speeches and Threatnings the ſaid Mr. James and Mr. Lateward have cauſed the Clerk, one Thomas Fewlis (who is a looſe, idle, and wicked Perſon) to ſwear contrary to his Knowledge, and to the Truth, and that only for fear of loſing his Clerk's Place and their Favour; and this Deponent the rather believes this, becauſe he hath heard the ſaid Fewlis commend the ſaid Mr. Gill, and ſet forth a quite contrary Character of him. And this Deponent farther ſaith, That the ſaid Mr. James and Mr. Lateward have given Mr. Gill very unjuſt Proſecution which hath reduc'd him to Poverty, Mr. Gill having been impriſoned at their Complaint in ſeveral Goals, (viz.) at Cambridge, in March 1702, and Aprill, May, June, and July 1704, and removed to Norwich Goal, and kept Priſoner all the Aſſize Week, till diſcharged the laſt Day according to Law; and believes that he was entered in the Goaler's Calender July 1703: And after their Threatning to impriſon him again if he preſumed to ſerve and preach to our Congregation any more, they have this laſt April perſecuted and impriſoned the ſaid Mr. Gill, and (without ſhewing Cauſe of the Impriſonment, or giving any Proſecution at Seſſions or Aſſizes, which was at the ſame time of his Impriſonment at Wisbech) they cauſed him to be Impreſt out of Goal for a Soldier, without Liberty to make any Defence, when at the ſame time he was our Miniſter, and well approved of, and highly beloved, having (as he may have ſtill) a very plentiful Allowance for his Maintenance, that way of Preaching (as this Deponent doth apprehend) being a lawful Employment for a Maintenance; and his Congregation is large, conſiſting of Gentlemen, and very ſubſtantial Freeholders, as well as Farmers: So that by the way of Proſecution, not only Mr. Gill, but alſo this Deponent, and all the ſaid Congregntion are Sufferers; and in truth Mr. James did not only threaten and proſecute Mr. Gill, and procured him ſent to Goal, and impreſt for a Soldier, as aforeſaid, but poſitively ſent to the Meeting-place (though qualified according to Law) and threatned ſome of the Congregation, and eſpeci-

ally

cially him this Deponent; and apprehended five several Men by a Warrant from Mr. Upwood, a Justice of the Peace, and carried them like Felons before the said Mr. Upwood; which Persons (although Mr. James is pleased to swear they were idle Persons) yet some were very substantial Freeholders, and the rest substantial Farmers, and very honest Men: And altho' Mr. James and Mr. Lateward pretend no Malice in their Prosecution, yet it is a real Truth they have highly abused both Mr. Gill and his Congregation, and constantly preach railing Sermons, as this Deponent hath heard and believes; and they are reputed very malitious and troublesome Men in the Parish, having excommunicated several Men, and totally ruined one Mr. Whitworth, our School-Master; and in carrying on that malicious Design against him, both Mr. James and his Curate did swear falsly against him at Swaffam Sessions, as one of the Grand Jury hath declared and affirmed; and prosecuted the said Mr. Whitworth, till they banished him the Town, causing him to be impress for a Soldier, as they did Mr. Gill. And this Deponent saith, That it is credibly affirmed by one John Marriot, that they would have had him to have sworn, That our Minister Mr. Gill was one Mr. Gill a Minister who escaped out of Darby Goal about six Years since, being convict for forging of Holy Orders, and counterfeiting the King's Coin; (altho' Mr. Gill had been in this Country about us nine or ten Years) but the said John Marriot refused to go contrary to his Conscience. And this Deponent farther saith, That Mr. Gill was never reported to be a Swearer or Drunkard, as is alledged in their Affidavits; and he verily believes he was never once seen to be drunk, nor heard to swear one Oath since he came into our Country: And this Deponent is very positive that neither Mr. James nor any that made Affidavits at present against Mr. Gill, have any intimate Acquaintance or personal Knowledge of the said Mr. Gill, excepting Nicholas Scott, Tho. Beart, and Tho. Fewlis; which said Thomas Fewlis is overawed to swear to carry on and vindicate their unjust Prosecution, as this Deponent believes; and this Deponent verily believes he would for a Reward swear twice as much on Mr. Gill's Behalf, if requested. And this Deponent farther saith, That Mr. Gill was coming the Morning towards London, being the third Day of July, about three a Clock in the Morning, and was arrested upon the Road in an Action of Debt at the Suit of one John

Smith,

Smith, *and is now in Custody, and held to Bail; and that the Bayliff says, the Plaintiff was urged to arrest Mr.* Gill *to prevent his attending the Court, that so Mr.* James *and Mr.* Lateward *might obtain an Advantage against him: he is in Custody at* Maypole, *ten Miles from home.*

Richard Tokelove.

4. Mrs. *Gill*, Mr. *Gill*'s Wife, swears, That her Husband came home from the Meeting on the Evening before, and did not stir out of his House till about two a Clock *Monday* Morning, when Mr. *Tokelove* and he took Horse together to go to *London* the same Day he was arrested.

Elizabeth Gill's Affidavit.

ELizabeth Gill, *the Wife of* Abraham Gill, *of* Welney *in the Isle of* Ely, *and County of* Cambridge, *maketh Oath, That upon* Sunday *the second Day of* July, A. D. 1704, *last past, this Deponent's Husband came home at Evening from his Congregation at* Upwell; *and after his coming home was never out of his House all that Night, till about one or two of the Clock the next Morning; at which time* Richard Tokelove *of* Upwell *came to call him, in order to go on a Journey with him towards* London. *And this Deponent saith, That her said Husband did not see nor speak with* John Betts *a Bayliff at that time, nor with any other: And that this Deponent's Husband, and the said* Richard Tokelove *took Horse together, and went on their Journey, intending for* London.

Elizabeth Gill.

5. Mr. *Gill* himself *who in this Case is Evidence for the Queen* swears, That he neither wrote any Letters to *Betts*, or call'd him up, or ordered him to arrest him, or procur'd any one else to order him, or knew any thing directly or indirectly of this Arrest, till he was surprized by him on the Road.

Mr. *Gill*'s two Affidavits.

ABraham Gill *of* Welney *in the Isle of* Ely, *in the County of* Cambridge, *maketh Oath, That he this Deponent hath seen two Letters, one dated the first, and the other the second*

day

day of July 1704, *sign'd* Abra. Gill; *and also a Letter dated* July *the* 3*d* 1704, *signed* John Smith; *as also a Writing purporting to be a Warrant for arresting this Defendant; and which said Letters and Warrant, when this Deponent saw the same, were annexed to the Affidavit of one* John Betts, *a Bayliff, produced in this Honourable Court. And this Deponent saith, That the said Letters or Warrant, or any or either of them, or any part of any or either of them, or the Name* Abra. Gill *so signed to the two first of the said Letters is not nor are of this Deponent's own Hand-writing; nor were the said Letters or Warrant, or either of them, or any part of them, or either of them writ by or with the Order, Knowledge, Privity, or Procurement of this Deponent. And this Deponent saith, That he was not in Company with or did see or speak to or with the said* John Betts *upon the said second Day of* July: *Nor did this Deponent call upon the said* John Betts *next Morning, or see him till he overtook and arrested this Deponent, as this Deponent was upon his Journey towards* London, *to attend this Court. And farther this Depenent saith, That the said* Betts *upon such Arrest held this Deponent to Bail, and this Deponent and one* Thomas Harrison *(as this Deponent's Bail) did seal and execute a Bail Bond accordingly, in the Presence of the said* Betts, *about one of the Clock that Day.*

Abra. Gill.

ABraham Gill *of* Welney, *within the Isle of* Ely, *in the County of* Cambridge, *maketh Oath, That he was no way directly nor indirectly privy to nor concerned in procuring* John Betts *to arrest him this Deponent; neither did he this Deponent write any Letter or Letters to order it to be done (as the said* Betts *in his Affidavit doth falsly depose) but this Deponent was upon the Road coming to* London, *in Obedience to a Rule made in this Honourable Court to appear in the said Court; and was arrested by the said* John Betts, *who then affirmed to this Deponent, and one* Richard Tokelove *(who then was with this Deponent) that the said Arrest was by the Procurement of Mr.* John Lateward, *on purpose to prevent this Deponent's Journey; or Words to the like Effect. And this Deponent farther maketh Oath, That he hath Freehold Lands in* Rivington *in* Lancashire, *of the Yearly Value of eight or ten Pounds; and hath had the same ever since the*

time

time of this Deponent's Marriage, being about fifteen or sixteen Years last past.

Abra. Gill.

Now these four Persons must all be forsworn, or else this Fellow has both perjur'd himself, forg'd the Letters, and Mr. *Lateward* one of the *Conspirators* was the Procurer and Contriver of this Arrest; and Mr. *Gill* is very willing to wait the Conclusion the Law will give to this Affair, when the World shall not fail of an impartial Account of the Particulars, an Indictment of Perjury being ordered to be brought against the said *Betts* for this matter.

To confront this indeed, Mr. *Lateward* swears to the following Affidavit, full of *Negatives*, *Neithers*, and *Don't knows*, and all for himself too: but that they may not complain of Partiality, his Affidavit must not be omitted, as follows,

JOHN Lateward *of* Welney, *in the Isle of* Ely, *and County of* Cambridge, *Clerk, aged twenty five Years and upward, maketh Oath, That he this Deponent never saw knew or had Acquaintance with any such Person as* John Smith *of* Downham *in* Norfolk, *Yeoman; nor did at any time ever write any Letter, or send any Messenger to any such Person as the said* John Smith, *concerning Mr.* Abraham Gill, *either about arresting him, or any wise else however; nor did this Deponent ever consent, order, or procure any Person so to do in his this Deponent's Name: Neither did this Deponent ever hear of any such Person as the said* Smith, *until after the said* Gill *was arrested, or pretended to be arrested, and at Liberty again: Nor did this Deponent ever order the said* Gill *to be arrested, nor knew that he was arrested, nor knew* Betts *the Bayliff which arrested the said* Gill, *till after such Arrest, if any was made, and the said* Gill *was again at Liberty. Nor can this Deponent any wise imagine how any Letter should be wrote to the said* Smith, *or any Messenger sent to him in this Deponent's Name about arresting the said* Gill, *unless the same was done by the said* Gill, *or by some other in his Behalf, or by his Procurement; which he this Deponent has good Reason to believe and suspect hath been done, because as the said* Betts *the Bayliff who arrested the said* Gill *hath informed this Deponent, and also this Deponent doth believe hath*

de-

deposed that the said Gill *sent him a Note to arrest him the said* Gill.

John Lateward.

To corroborate this Affidavit, and being we suppose asham'd of what he had done, Mr. *L.....d* took some pains to make Mr. *Smith* of *Downham* to say back again what he had sworn for Proof of this Matter upon *Lateward*; which Attempt appears by the Oaths of three credible Persons of *Downham*, as follows.

GEorge Holt, *late of* Downham, *Gent.* William Pincher *of the same Town and County Taylor, and* Mary Smith *the Wife of* John Smith *of the same Town and County, do severally make Oath, That one who called himself* Hugh James *Rector of* Upwell *in the County of* Norfolk, *but, as we are informed, was Mr.* Lateward, *came to the said* John Smith's *House in* Downham *aforesaid, upon the* 13*th day of* November *now last past, and brought along with him one* Johnson *an Attorney of Her Majesty's Court of* Queen's-bench, *a Man of Tricks, and an unjust Practitioner; who together did intreat* John Smith, *the Husband of* Mary Smith *one of these Deponents, to own and swear that the Affidavit he had made in the* Queen's-bench *this Term was unjust and untrue: but he affirmed what he had done was just, and that he would stand by it; upon which they urged him to unsay it; and then said it would prove his Ruin if the said* John Smith *did not revoke the former Affidavit.*

Geo. Holt.
William Pincher.
Mary Smith.

And against that part of Mr. *Lateward*'s Oath and *Betts*'s Oath, that it was wrote by Mr. *Gill*, besides the Affidavit of Mr. *Gill* already mention'd, we conclude this black Story with the following Affidavit.

THomas Wilson, *now of* Downham Market *in the County of* Norfolk, *Gent. maketh Oath, That he being at the House of* John Smith *in* Downham *aforesaid, saw and read a Letter there that was sent from Mr.* John Lateward *to urge him to give Orders to Arrest Mr.* Gill; *and having seen,*

and well knowing the Hand-writing of Mr. Gill, *does verily believe and affirm, that the ſaid Letter was not Mr.* Gill's *Hand-writing.*

Tho. Wilſon.

Only as the Conſpirators have taken a great deal of pains to blacken Mr. *Gill*, and load him with Crimes, of all which we ſhall fairly and honourably clear him; we cannot but preſent the World with two Evidences to the Character of *this Knight of the Poſt*, Mr. *Betts*: and 'tis humbly recommended to the Reverend Mr. *James* and Mr. *Lateward*, to clear their worthy Agent of the Charge, leſt the World ſhould blame their Underſtanding for hugging ſuch a Wretch, and careſſing a Man of whom they ought to have been aſham'd to have been ſeen in his Company.

1. Mr. *Martin*, Poſt-maſter of *Epping*, *where this* Betts *it ſeems liv'd till he could ſtay there no longer*, ſwears, That he (*Betts*) having given Mr. *Martin* Poſſeſſion of ſome Goods for a juſt Debt, he broke open the Door in the Night, and carried them away; and that being carried before a Juſtice, he ſav'd himſelf from being ſent to Jayl by reſtoring the Goods again.

THomas Martin, *of* Epping *in the County of* Eſſex *Innholder, maketh Oath, That he this Deponent knows* John Betts *late of* Epping *aforeſaid Innkeeper, but now of* Chatteris *in the Iſle of* Ely *and County of* Cambridge *as this Deponent is informed and believes, and ſaith, that the ſaid* John Betts *being indebted to this Deponent, this Deponent about ſix Years ſince cauſed him to be Arreſted; and thereupon the ſaid* Betts, *to procure his Liberty, delivered certain Goods into Cuſtody of another Perſon in truſt for this Deponent: But the ſaid* Betts *cauſed the Door of the Room where ſuch Goods were, to be broke open in the night time, and conveyed the ſame away, and would not let this Deponent have the ſame again till this Deponent took him before a Juſtice of the Peace, who forced the ſaid* Betts *to re-deliver the ſaid Goods, or elſe ſaid he would ſend the ſaid* Betts *to Jayl.*

Thomas Martin.

2. Mr. *Earl* of *Epping* ſwears, *Betts* is a Perſon of a ſcandalous Character, eſteemed a Highway-man, ſo that few of his Neighbours

bours care to be seen in his Company, believing him a Man that cares not what he says or swears.

Richard Earl, *of* Epping *in the County of* Essex, *Yeoman, aged sixty Years or thereabouts, maketh Oath, that he knoweth* John Betts *late of* Epping *aforesaid, but now of* Chatteris *in the Isle of* Ely *and County of* Cambridge, *a Bailiff, and saith, that the said* Betts *is a Person of a very bad and scandalous Life and Reputation, and is esteemed no better than a Highway-man, insomuch that few of his Neighbours care to keep him Company; and this Deponent verily believes he cares not what he either saith or swears. And this Deponent farther saith, That the said* Betts, *when he lived at* Epping, *caused a Room, wherein he had put certain Goods in trust for one Mr.* Martin *a Creditor of the said* Betts, *to be broke open in the Night-time, and was taken before Justice* Wroth *on that account, who forced the said* Betts *to deliver back the said Goods, or said he would send him to Jayl, or used Words to that or the like effect.*

Richard Earl.

All these Affidavits were, in behalf of Mr. *Gill*, produc'd in Court; and Mr. *Gill* being examin'd on several Interrogatories upon Oath, and under Recognizance, and having given the Court full Satisfaction, was discharg'd of the Contempt; and the rest of this black Story lies now before the Judges of Her Majesty's Court of *Queen's-bench*, where Mr. *Gill* doubts not to have Justice.

The Conclusion.

IT *is enough*, and the Matter of Fact, as here truly related, is Mr. *Gill*'s Satisfaction; he covets no Victories, and scorns to Insult them on the Conquest his Innocence and the Power of Truth made upon their procur'd Perjuries, he recommends it to them to consider of what they have done, and at least shew so much Penitence as becomes them to make their Appearance in their Cloth tolerable.

It remains only, to finish the Vindication of Mr. *Gill*, to reckon up a little the numerous Slanders and Reproaches which they have raised upon his Reputation, and by undoubted Testimony

and positive Evidence confront their Calumnies, and clear up his Character to the Satisfaction of his Friends, who have been too much impos'd upon, (*and the Author asks their Pardon if he says, have been something too apt to believe*) and to the Conviction of his Enemies, who have Triumph'd in a bad Cause, and cry'd *Victoria* before they put their Armour off.

In order to this, 'tis necessary to set down, in their own Language and the blackest Terms they could invent, all the Calumnies and Abuses they have rais'd upon this poor Man in order to justifie their ill Practices, and make their Designs tolerable to the World.

And first, The Publication in the *Gazette* speaks for it self, and needs no Comment ——

And here 'tis very observable, that it yet remains a Mystery who Convey'd this Advertisement to the Printer of the *Gazette*, no body having yet thought fit to own it, and the —— at *Norwich* disowning it. And this, we presume, must be referr'd to the Second Part of this History; by which time Mr. *Jones*, no doubt, in his own Vindication, will produce his Voucher, and the Courts of Justice so come at the Author.

When the Justices, Clergy-men, and the rest of the *Conspirators* came to be call'd upon to shew Cause of all this Usage, after frequent Motions for Time, they bring up numerous Affidavits, partly in their own Justification, and partly Defaming the Man.

Of these Affidavits, some of them being too long to insert in the Compass of this Book, We have taken a faithful Abstract, and to shew our Impartiality in this Account, and that the World may see whether We have done them Justice or no, the Affidavits are all left at the Place aforesaid, for any Person that desires Satisfaction, to peruse.

" First, *Thurgood Upton* Esq; and Justice of Peace, swears, " That Mr. *Hugh James* and *Thomas Beart*, *both frequently mentioned* " *in this Book*, made Complaint of Mr. *Gill*, That he was a Per- " son of a scandalous and debauch'd Life, a Frequenter of Ale- " houses and Houses of ill Fame, and did for several Months co- " habit with a certain Woman as his Wife, whom he call'd *Eli-* " *zabeth*, and by whom he had two Children; and that some time " after the Birth of the first Child by the said *Elizabeth*, another " Woman follow'd the said *Gill*, and pretended to be his Wife; " that he did for several Weeks cohabit with both the said Wo- " men, and had also a Child by the second Woman, who some

short

" ſhort time after dying, he continued to cohabit with the firſt " Woman as his Wife —— But this Gentleman being a Juſtice " for the County of *Norfolk*, and the ſaid *Gill* living in the Iſle of " *Ely*, he refuſ'd to grant his Warrant, having no Authority " to act there —— Mr. *Upton* alſo ſwears, that there was a farther " Complaint againſt Mr. *Gill* by the ſaid Mr. *Hugh James*, for " keeping a Meeting in the Barn of one *Richard Tokelove*, and " ſeveral others that were preſent at the ſaid Meeting, who ap- " pearing and affirming that the ſaid *Gill* had qualified himſelf, and " the Place was duly Licenſed according to Law, he diſmiſt them. " Mr. *Upton* adds his Belief that there is no Malice in Mr. *James's* " Proſecution, giving him the Character of a ſober Man, and " of good Reputation, but Mr. *Gill* of a notorious ill Life and " Converſation, and a Diſgrace to Religion.

THurgood Upwood *of* Terrington *in the County of* Norfolk *Eſq; one of Her Majeſty's Juſtices of the Peace for the ſaid County, maketh Oath, That in or about the Month of* January 1701, *Complaint was made to this Deponent by* Hugh James *Clerk, Rector of* Upwell *in the ſaid County, and alſo by* Thomas Beart *of the ſaid Pariſh of* Upwell, *That one* Abraham Gill, *who had for ſome time paſt reſided within the ſaid Pariſh of* Upwell, *and had officiated at* Welney *a Hamlet of the ſaid Pariſh of* Upwell *as Curate to* Dr. Grigg *ſince deceaſed, and afterward to* Talbot Hibart *likewiſe deceaſed, who were reſpectively Rectors of the ſaid Pariſh, That the ſaid* Gill *was a Perſon of a very ſcandalous and debauched Life, being a great Frequenter of Alehouſes and other Houſes of evil Fame, and did alſo for ſeveral Months cohabit with a certain Woman as his Wife, whom he called* Elizabeth, *by whom he had two Children during his abode there, and that ſome ſhort time after the Birth of the firſt Child by the ſaid* Elizabeth, *another Woman followed the ſaid* Gill *to the ſaid Pariſh of* Upwell, *who likewiſe pretended to be his Wife, and that he did for ſeveral Weeks cohabit with both the ſaid Women, and had alſo a Child by the ſecond Woman, who ſome ſhort time afterwards dying, he did continue with the firſt Woman called* Elizabeth, *who hath ever ſince cohabited with him, as they informed this Deponent. But it appearing to this Deponent, that the ſaid* Gill *was then an Inhabitant in that part of the ſaid Pariſh that lies within the Iſle of* Ely *and County of* Cambridge, *did refuſe to grant a War-*

rant against him, he having no Authority to act there. And this Deponent saith, That there being farther Complaint made by the said Hugh James *against the said* Gill, *and several others, in or about the Month of* March *last past, for that the said* Gill *had kept a Meeting in the Barn of one* Richard Tooklove *at* Upwell *in the said County of* Norfolk, *not having qualified himself, or given notice of the said House according to Law. This Deponent did grant a Warrant against the said* Tooklove, *and several others that were present at the said Meeting, whose Names this Deponent doth not remember. And the said* Tooklove *and the rest of them affirming that the said* Gill *had a Licence to Teach in the said Barn, and that the same was duly Licensed; thereupon this Deponent forbore any farther Prosecution untill he should receive farther Information of the matter charged against them: and farther deposeth, That he doth not know or believe that there was any Malice in the Prosecution made by the said* Hugh James *against the said* Gill, *the said* James *being a Person of sober Life and good Reputation: and, on the contrary, That the said* Gill *is very notorious in his ill Life and bad Conversation, and a great disgrace to the Christian Religion.*

Th. Upwood.

Mr. *James* himself makes Oath at large.

HUgh James, *Rector of* Upwell *in the County of* Norfolk, *Clerk, maketh Oath, That at the time of his Institution and Induction to the Rectory of* Upwell, *he found* Abraham Gill *officiating as Curate in the Chapel of* Welney, *according to the Rites of the Church of* England. *And this Deponent being informed that the said* Abraham Gill *was a Person of notorious ill Life and Conversation, this Deponent went to the Hamlet of* Welney *to reprove the said* Abraham Gill *for his scandalous Practices, and to examine by what Authority and Licence he there officiated as Minister and Curate: But the said* Abraham Gill *denying to shew this Deponent his Orders and Licence; upon this, and for several other reasons, this Deponent made Complaint of the said* Gill, *and his wicked Practices, to the Lord Bishop of* Norwich *his Diocesan, and deliver'd in to his Lordship an Information against him,*

him, made by Thomas Beart *before* Thurgood Upton *Esq; one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of* Norfolk. *Upon which, and several other Informations, he was prosecuted in the Consistory Court of* Norwich, *where he was detected of Forging Holy Orders under the Hand and Seal of the present Lord Bishop of* Chester: *for which, and several other enormous Crimes, he had Excommunication read against him in* Welney, *from which he is not yet absolved. But some time after, as this Deponent is credibly informed, endeavour'd to impose upon one Mr.* Cooper, *Minister of* Bollingbrook *in* Lincolnshire, *by forged Orders under the Hand and Seal of the present Lord Bishop of* Ely, *desiring to be his Curate: but being detected there of this Forgery, the said* Gill *returned to* Welney *aforesaid, whither his Family had been sent from* Bollingbrook *aforesaid by Order of the Justices of* Lincolnshire. *And the said* Gill *still continuing in his scandalous Life, set up a separate Conventicle in the Parish of* Upwell, *in the Barn of* Richard Tokelove *of the same Parish; and did in that Barn, on the Sabbath-day, preach to some Persons of no great Credit: Upon which this Deponent thinking it his Duty to take notice of such Disorders and unlawful Practices, especially by such an infamous Person, procured a Warrant from the said Mr.* Upton, *to bring before him* Richard Tokelove, *and four other idle Persons, who absented themselves from the Church to follow and encourage this* Gill, *that they might shew legal Authority for his Conventicle, having no malicious Intent in the Prosecution. And these Persons affirming that their Teacher,* Abraham Gill, *had the Licence for their Conventicle, the said Mr.* Upton *returned the Warrant by the Constable to bring them back if they did not produce or send the Licence to him; and they not obeying this Order, he granted another Warrant for the said* Gill *and* Tokelove: *but* Abraham Gill *withdrawing himself into the Isle of* Ely, *this Deponent made Complaint to* Tho. Edwards *sen. Esq; one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the Isle of* Ely *in the County of* Cambridge; *which said* Thomas Edwards *granted a Warrant to Apprehend the said* Gill *for his disorderly living, and preaching in a Conventicle, not being qualified for the same: By vertue of which Warrant he was brought before several of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace in* Wisbich, *who for several Reasons Committed him to Jayl. And this Deponent*

farther

farther saith, That he did not speak to the said Abraham Gill before he came into the Room where the said Justices were; and that there he gave him no scurrilous Language, but only spoke what was necessary to inform the Justices concerning his ill Life and illegal Practices. And this Deponent farther saith, That he did not move to have him sent to Goal, nor did he affirm that his Licence was forged, but only that there was great Suspicion of the same, it being only a blank Certificate of a Licence without date, and that it was not Mr. Brown's Hand, as other Gentlemen there likewise affirmed, who knew Mr. Brown's Hand. And this Deponent farther maketh Oath, That he believes that the Certificate under the Name of John Arrowsmith to be his proper Hand, and that other Certificate under the Name of Nich. Brown not to be his proper Hand, having seen both their Hands upon other Occasions. Neither Mr. Nich. Brown nor John Jeffery Clerk, having any Jurisdiction in that part of Norfolk where Richard Tokelove's Barn stands.

Hugh James.

THomas Edwards of Wisbech in the Isle of Ely and County of Cambridge Esq; one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said Isle of Ely, maketh Oath, That upon the Complaint of Mr. Hugh James, Rector of Upwell, against Abraham Gill of Welney, for divers ill Crimes and Misdemeanours, He this Deponent, on or about the latter end of March last, to the best of this Deponent's Remembrance, granted a Warrant to bring the said Abraham Gill before this Deponent or some other of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said Isle, to answer the said Complaint, with Directions to bring Sureties for his Good Behaviour along with him: and that on or about the 20th day of April following, the said Abraham Gill was brought before this Deponent and Josiah Colvile Esq; and several other Justices of the Peace of the said Isle, where were also present the said Mr. James, and Mr. Lateward his Curate, and several others. And the said Mr. James, amongst other Crimes, accused the said Gill of living very lewdly and wickedly with a Woman whom he kept when his former Wife was living, and had Children by the said Woman when his former Wife was living, and that it was highly probable he was not then married to her; as also of his setting up a Conventicle at Welney without any lawful Authority

Authority that the ſaid Mr. James *could find out or hear of; with his being accuſtomed to Swearing and other Immoralities. And the ſaid* Abraham Gill *offering little or nothing in his own Defence as to his bad Life and Converſation, and being a Perſon obſcure, and unknown from whence he came, and of a very infamous Character and Reputation on divers accounts; this Deponent, with the other Juſtices then preſent, required him the ſaid* Abraham Gill *to give Sureties for his good Behaviour, as the leaſt thing they would demand of him; which he not being able to do, although moſt of his ſubſtantial Neighbours were preſent, the ſaid Mr.* Colvile *and this Deponent Sealed his* Mittimus, *and ſent him to Goal till he ſhould find Sureties accordingly. And this Deponent farther ſaith, That he did not hear of any ſcurrilous or ill Language which was given to the ſaid* Abraham Gill *by any Perſon then preſent: but ſaith, That he the ſaid* Abraham Gill *did then produce the Paper hereunto annexed, purporting a Licence from the Archdeacon of the Archdeaconry of* Norwich, *for holding Meetings in the Houſe or Barn of one* Richard Tokelove *in* Upwell *aforeſaid: which being without Date, and this Deponent and the other Juſtices preſent being well informed that* Upwell *was not within the Juriſdiction of the Archdeacon therein named, and although it had been ſo, yet that the ſaid* Abraham Gill *was not duly qualified to preach or teach in the ſaid Meeting-houſe, as being an Excommunicate Perſon as was then credibly affirmed, nor could he make it appear in the leaſt that he had qualified himſelf by Law to be a Teacher in ſuch a Meeting, at any Seſſions of the Peace either in* Norfolk *or the Iſle of* Ely; *and ſeveral Perſons then preſent affirming alſo that the Name* Nicho. Browne *thereunto Subſcribed was not the proper Hand-writing of Mr.* Nicholas Browne; *this Deponent and the other Juſtices did not look upon the ſame to be authentick, and had reaſon to ſuſpect it to be forged, and therefore detained it till farther Enquiry might be made concerning it.*

Tho. Edwards.

The following Oath is moſt remarkable, becauſe the Perſon has been frequently heard to acknowledge his Ignorance of what he ſwore, and it being made upon publick Faith.

THomas Fewlis, *of the Hamlet of* Welney, *Clerk to the Chapel of* Welney *aforeſaid, being in the Pariſh of* Upwell *in the*

County

County of Norfolk, *maketh Oath, That he officiated as Clerk of the ſaid Chapel during ſome part of the time that* Abraham Gill *ſerved as Curate thereof; and hath received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at his hands as a Prieſt of the Church of* England; *who ſeveral times adminiſtred the ſame to other Perſons in the ſaid Chapel in this Deponent's preſence. And ſaith alſo, that the ſaid* Abraham Gill, *for ſome part of the time he officiated in the ſaid Cure, did in a ſcandalous manner cohabit with two Women at one and the ſame time, one whereof, whom he more particularly owned as his Wife when alive, is now dead, and the other is ſtill alive, and lives with him now as his Wife. And ſaith, that his ſaid former Wife hath not been dead above four Years, to the beſt of this Deponent's Remembrance; and that by this preſent Wife the ſaid* Abraham Gill *hath three Children which he owns, and one by the other Wife now at* Welneth *aforeſaid; and that the eldeſt of the ſaid three Children by this preſent Wife is about eight years old, and older than the other Child at* Welney *aforeſaid which he had by his ſaid deceaſed Wife.*

Thomas Fewlis.

Mr. *Lateward* the other Conſpirator's Oath is at large as follows.

JOhn Lateward *Clerk, and Curate of* Welney *in the Iſle of* Ely *and County of* Cambridge, *maketh Oath, That one* Abraham Gill, *who ſome time paſt reſided within the Pariſh of* Upwell *in the County of* Cambridge, *and had officiated at* Welney *aforeſaid (a Hamlet of the ſaid Pariſh of* Upwell) *as Curate to Doctor* Grigg *ſince deceaſed, and afterwards to* Talbot Hobart *likewiſe deceaſed, who were reſpectively Rectors of the ſaid Pariſh, That the ſaid* Gill *is a Perſon of a notorious ill Character, and that this Deponent upon the Lord's-day being the* 22d *day of* November 1702, *did read in the Chapel of* Welney *aforeſaid an Excommunication againſt the ſaid* Gill, *wherein he was charged with ſeveral heinous Crimes, as Forgery, and the like. And this Deponent farther ſaith, That the ſaid* Gill *hath and doth own a Child which he had by the Woman he now cohabiteth with, called* Abraham Gill, *which is older than a Child that he had by another Woman whom he pretended to be his firſt Wife. And whereas the ſaid* Gill, *by his Affidavit in Writing made by him the* 20th *day of* May *laſt before* Richard Penſon

Penſon *Gent. one of Her Majeſty's Commiſſioners to take Affidavits in the Court of* Queen's-bench *at* Weſtminſter, *amongſt other matters and things in the ſame Affidavit mentioned, charged this Deponent of ſpeaking theſe Words following* (viz.) *wiſhing his Body might rot in Goal, and his Soul periſh eternally; This Deponent ſaith he did not ſpeak the Words before recited, nor any Words to the ſame effect, nor ever made any Proſecution in his own Name, or upon his own Account, againſt the ſaid* Gill, *and had no other end or deſign, than (in the due Performance of his Duty) to bring the ſaid* Gill *to condign Puniſhment, he having highly diſhonoured God and the Chriſtian Religion by his vicious Life and Converſation. And this Deponent farther depoſeth, That for the ſpace of one Year laſt paſt, or thereabouts, the ſaid* Gill *and his Family have been and are ſtill a Charge to the Inhabitants living within the ſaid Hamlet of* Welney, *they being frequently relieved by the Overſeers of the Poor there.*

John Lateward.

The following Affidavits are of the Juſtices who liſted this Mr. *Gill*; tho' it appears both of them are glad to put in, that they did not ſet their Hands to the Order or Certificate.

DAvid Rowlands *of* Haddenham *in the Iſle of* Ely *and County of* Cambridge *Eſq; one of Her Majeſty's Juſtices of the Peace for the ſaid Iſle, maketh Oath, That he this Deponent being at* Wisbech *in the ſaid Iſle at the laſt Aſſize, one* Abraham Gill *and ſome other Perſons were there brought before this Deponent and four other Juſtices of the Peace for the ſaid Iſle, as Perſons fit to be Liſted to ſerve Her Majeſty as Soldiers according to a late Act of Parliament for Raiſing Recruits for the Land Forces and* Marines. *And this Deponent aſſiſted the ſaid Juſtices in the Examination of the ſaid Perſons, and by all that was ſaid on both ſides, this Deponent doth upon his Oath declare, That he adjudged it agreeable to the ſaid Act of Parliament, that the ſaid* Abraham Gill *ſhould be Liſted as a Soldier, which alſo was the Opinion of the other Juſtices then preſent. And farther this Deponent doth declare, that he this Deponent going into another Room after the aforeſaid Examination of the ſaid* Abraham Gill, *did not Sign or Seal any Order or Certificate for the Liſting the ſaid* Abraham Gill *as a Soldier. And this De-*

ponent farther ſaith, That neither he, nor any other Juſtices of Peace then preſent, to the beſt of the Deponent's Remembrance and Belief, did ſay or ſo much as mention that a Conventicle was of bad conſequence, or the Fanaticks ought not to be countenanced, or that the generality of the Pariſh of Upwell *flocked after the ſaid* Gill, *or that the Conventicle which the ſaid* Gill *had in* Upwell *ought to be ſuppreſſed, or any words to that or the like effect. And this Deponent farther ſaith, That the ſaid* Gill *did not then pretend (as this Deponent verily believes) to be a Freeman of any Corporation that ſent Burgeſſes to Parliament; but this Deponent doth remember, that the ſaid* Gill *did pretend to be a Freeholder in* Lancaſhire, *which neither this Deponent, nor the reſt of the Juſtices then preſent, did believe, for that they had been credibly informed of ſeveral Forgeries and ill Practices of the ſaid* Gill. *And this Deponent farther ſaith, That a Warrant of* Hue and Cry, *ſome days after, coming to the Pariſh where this Deponent lived, againſt the ſaid* Gill *and others, this Deponent, according to his Duty, cauſed the ſame to be ſent forward.*

David Rowlands.

FRancis Fern, *Prebendary of* Ely, *and one of Her Majeſty's Juſtices of the Peace for the Iſle of* Ely, *maketh Oath, That* Abraham Gill *of* Welney *was brought before him and four other Juſtices of the Peace for the ſaid Iſle, and upon the hearing of what was ſaid concerning the ſaid* Abraham Gill, *and what the ſaid* Abraham Gill *ſaid for himſelf, this Deponent was of Opinion (as alſo the four other Juſtices of the Peace) that the ſaid* Abraham Gill *might and ought (according to the late Act of Parliament for Raiſing Recruits for her Majeſty's Forces) be Liſted in Her Majeſty's Service: But notwithſtanding this his Opinion, this Deponent ſaith, That being called into another Room in the Inn about other buſineſs, He this Deponent* did not Sign or Seal any Certificate, Order, or Warrant, *to adjudge the ſaid* Abraham Gill *to be a Soldier Liſted according to the ſaid Act. And whereas the ſaid* Abraham Gill, *in his Affidavit, affirmeth that he is a Preacher to a Congregation of Proteſtant Diſſenters, Licenſed according to Law, this Deponent ſaith, That the ſaid* Abraham Gill *did not, in the Hearing of this Deponent, make any Proof, or ſo much as offer to make any Proof, that he had qualified himſelf as the*

Law

Law directs to be a Preacher or Teacher in any Congregation of Proteſtants Diſſenting from the Church of England. *And whereas the ſaid* Abraham Gill *did alledge in his Affidavit, that this Deponent did ſay, that a Conventicle was of bad Conſequence, and that they ought not to be countenanced, and that the generality of the Pariſh flocked after* Abraham Gill, *which would breed great Diſturbances in* Upwell, *as it did all over* England; *this Deponent ſaith, that he this Deponent did never ſpeak theſe Words, or any Words to that effect.*

Fran. Fern.

JOhn Bellamy *of* Wisbech *in the Iſle of* Ely *and County of* Cambridge *Eſq; one of Her Majeſty's Juſtices of the Peace for the ſaid Iſle, maketh Oath, That* Abraham Gill *of* Welney *in the ſaid Iſle of* Ely, *is, and has been all along, a Perſon of a very infamous Reputation by the Accounts this Deponent has received of him, being under the Character of cohabiting with two Wives or Women at the ſame time, and having Children by them both; and of being a drunken and debauch'd Man: and ſaith, that He the ſaid* Gill, *amongſt others, was brought before this Deponent, as a Perſon fit to be Impreſt into Her Majeſty's Service, according to the late Act of Parliament made for that purpoſe, where were preſent at the ſame time* Joſia Colvile, Ralph Peirſon, *and* David Rowlands *Eſquires, and* Francis Fern *Clerk, all of them Juſtices of the Peace for the ſaid Iſle of* Ely, *when this Deponent made no Objection to the ſaid* Gill's *being Inliſted according to the ſaid Act, any more than the ſaid other Juſtices, ſaving that the ſaid* Gill *alledged that he had a Freehold at* Wigan *in* Lincolnſhire *of* 12 *l. per Ann. to the beſt of this Deponent's Remembrance. He this Deponent believes he might deſire ſome time might be given him to make that appear, if it could be done. But this Deponent doth deny that he ever had any account from* Norwich *that the ſaid* Gill's *Licence was good, or that he knew any thing certain of that matter. And ſaith, that to the beſt of his remembrance, the ſaid* Gill *was at the ſaid Meeting ordered to be Impreſt by all the ſaid Juſtices (excepting the ſaid Mr.* Colvile, *who, as this Deponent remembers, went home before the matter was ended) and that the Articles of War were read, and the Liſting money tender'd to him as he doth believe; but withal the ſaid* Gill *was told, that if he could make it appear he had a Free-*

hold

hold of forty Shillings a Year, or a Right of Voting in the Election of Members of Parliament, or to that effect, he ſhould be forthwith diſcharg'd. And this Deponent ſaith, that he knoweth of no Freehold the ſaid Gill *hath at* Welney *aforeſaid, or any where elſe, or had at that time.*

J. Bellamy.

Theſe are the principal Affidavits, and indeed, all that pretend either to excuſe their Crimes or to prove his.

In which the Reader is deſir'd to obſerve, That here is abundance of Recourſe to — *Evil-fame*, being *Credibly informed*, Complaint *having been made*, and the like, referring to the Morals and Converſation of this Man: and who that has Enemies of like Qualifications may not come under *all that? But* 'tis humbly recommended to all impartial Enquirers that are willing to be truly inform'd of this matter, and who would rather hear the Truth of a Caſe than be Impos'd upon, to conſider,

Here is not one poſitive Oath, no not among all his Enemies, to any of theſe Facts.

No Man makes Oath that he ever ſaw him Drunk.

Or, That he ever Heard him ſwear. [*'Tis ſtrange they ſhould not, if it was ſo Common.*]

Or, That he Broke out of Jayl.

Or, That he Forg'd his Orders.

Or, That his Licence was Forg'd.

Nay, The very Particulars in the *Gazette* are not ſo much as attempted to be Prov'd in any of theſe Affidavits:

That he was ever Employ'd under an Attorney.

Forging a ſecond time Orders under the Hand and Seal of the Biſhop of *Ely*.

This Forgery being Detected at *Bullingbrook* in *Lincolnſhire*.

His being taken into Cuſtody upon the ſame.

His making his Eſcape, and flying from Juſtice.

And 'tis fairly offer'd to Mr. *Jones*, who we believe has been unwarily drawn into this Snare, That if but any one of the aboveſaid Articles can be prov'd by him, Mr. *Gill* will ceaſe giving him any Trouble on account of all the reſt.

'Tis very hard Mr. *Jones* on the bare Recommendation of any Man, tho' never ſo great, ſhould allege ſuch black Things as theſe upon an innocent Man, and neither he nor his Authors be

be able to make out one Clauſe of it: from which we wiſh him a good Deliverance, and leave that part to the Iſſue of the Law.

Indeed we have two hard-mouth'd Fellows that ſwear heartily; but theſe diſcover ſo little Wit with their Good-will, that the eaſineſs of proving them Perjur'd will be as much a Scandal upon their Senſes as their Honeſty; we mean Mr. *Lateward* and Mr. *Fowlis* Mr. *Gill*'s Clark.

Wherefore we ſhall begin with this ſwearing Curate, whoſe Oath is, That Mr. *Gill* owns a Child by the Name of *Abraham Gill* which is elder than a Child he had by his firſt Wife.

No Man but Mr. *Lateward* would ha' been caught in ſuch a *Fool-Trap*, and have ſworn what is ſo exceeding eaſie to be detected, the Children being to be produc'd, and their Ages prov'd.

Now 'tis plain and known to all the Neighbourhood, and a thing in which 'tis impoſſible the Truth can be conceal'd, that Mr. *Gill*'s firſt Wife has been dead upwards of ſeven Years, and the eldeſt Child he has by his preſent Wife is but five Years and half old, or thereabout.

The neceſſary Proof of this is omitted here, not that it is not the moſt eaſie of all this Affair to make out, but becauſe it being to come before a Court of Juſtice as matter of Evidence, 'tis referr'd to the genuine Proof of fact, and the Iſſue on a Tryal, when Mr. *Lateward* will do well to produce this little *Abraham in nubibus*, and prove his Age, and the Time of the Death of the firſt Wife, and Marriage of the ſecond, and ſee how he can make theſe things out.

As to the Clerk's Affidavit, he has frequently own'd in Mr. *Gill*'s hearing ſince, that he was drunk when he made it, and that he knew not what was in it, and that if he had known there had been any ſuch thing in it, he would not have offer'd to ha' ſworn it.

'Tis a moſt unaccountable thing, that Mr. *Lateward* ſhould ſo far expoſe himſelf in his Affidavit, when the Children are all alive, born in the ſame Place, their Age regiſter'd in the Pariſh-books, and ſo many living Witneſſes of the Time of their Birth; and we bluſh for him to think, if he is not hardned beyond the very Father of Lyes himſelf, what Confuſion he muſt be in, when he ſhall be ask'd to produce this Child of Mr. *Gill* that muſt be above nine Years old, or to name where it was Born, when Regiſtred, or any Circumſtances of the matter.

So much is Malice frequently forſaken of its Sence, that the juſt regard Providence always ſhews to Injur'd Innocence, is the Safety of all honeſt Men, cauſing the Subtilty of wicked falſe Accuſers to abandon them, and their Folly as well as Wickedneſs to go hand.

hand in hand; that Sin and Shame might come together, and their false Accusation carry its Detection in it self.

If these Gentlemen have any farther Defence to make, any more Affidavits to bring into Court, the Editor of this promises them to give them their full and free place in the second part of this History; but humbly desires them, whether Clergy-men or Magistrates, that, for the Honour and Dignity of their Offices and Character, and the Justification of their Understandings, that they would either more nicely adhere to the Matter of Fact, or more politickly conceal the vicious part, that they may not expose themselves, and force their humble Servants to detect them, to avoid the Scandal of Blindness and Stupidity: that they would leave Trifling, Circling, and going Round-about Mr. *Gill*'s Character with *Supposes*, we *have Heard*, and we *are Inform'd*, and Says that *he is inform'd*, and the like; but, that they would rather tell us plainly, and make it out, When he was Drunk, or Swore, or Broke Jayl, or Forg'd Orders, or Liv'd Scandalously; for certainly, Gentlemen, these things ought to be made out, or else to suggest them is a most barbarous Treatment, and a Slander that redounds to the Infamy of the Contrivers.

AND now we come to present the World with the Account Mr. *Gill* gives of himself, not from his own Mouth, but from the Mouth of numerous Throngs of Neighbours, Inhabitants, and Persons both knowing his Character and willing to do Justice.

And first, to obviate the Scandal of his having Forg'd the Hand and Seal of the Bishop of *Chester*, and only pretended to have enter'd into Holy Orders, besides the Original Orders left as aforesaid, take the Testimony of a Minister of the Church of *England* who was Ordain'd at the same time, as follows:

RIchard Tod *of* Bonwick *in the Isle of* Ely *and County of* Cambridge, *Clerk, maketh Oath, That* Abraham Gill *of* Welney *in the said Isle and County, Clerk, now a Preacher to a Dissenting Congregation at* Upwell *in* Norfolk, *was Ordained by* Nicholas *Lord Bishop of* Chester, *upon the same Day that this Deponent and five other Young-men was Ordained; that is to say, at* Trinity, *in the Year of our Lord* 1692: *and received his Letters of Orders, as we all did, under the Episcopal Seal of the Lord Bishop of* Chester *aforesaid.*

Rich. Tod.

This

This honeſt Gentleman is unhappily dead ſince the making this Affidavit, or elſe we had received a larger Account of the Particulars of Mr. *Gill*'s Ordination, and the Names of the five other young Miniſters Ordain'd at the ſame time: but the Authentick Affidavit, together with the Original Orders under the Epiſcopal Seal, left as before with Mr. *Skey*, is Teſtimony ſufficient to clear Mr. *Gill*; and all that cavil at it, are challeng'd to do their utmoſt to detect any Forgery, Colluſion, or Crime whatſoever.

From clearing up this Point, we come to his Character, as well in *Lancaſhire* from whence he came, where he was born, and liv'd ſeveral Years, as in *Norfolk* where all this Tragedy has been acted. And firſt, from *Rivington* where he was born, and where his Father yet lives, the following Certificate has been ſent up Sign'd by the Reverend Mr. *Bradly* and the principal Inhabitants, the Original whereof is left as before, with the reſt of the Papers relating to this Story.

THis is to Certifie all Perſons whom it may concern, That Abraham Gill, Son of Robert Gill of Rivington in the County of Lancaſter, lived many Years in our Neighbourhood, both before and after he was married; and that in all that time he lived ſoberly, free from any Aſperſion of Drunkenneſs or profane Swearing, that ever we knew or heard of; and that he married a Woman of good Reputation, for Modeſty, Sobriety, and Chaſtity, as far as ever we know, by whom he had a Daughter in theſe Parts, yet living, and ſome other Children departed this life ſome Years ago. We never knew, nor credibly heard, that he had any other Wife, either in Lancaſhire or any other place, during all the time of her life; who, as we have heard and do believe, lived with him at the time of her Death. This We, ſometimes his Neighbours and Acquaintance, do hereby Atteſt, witneſs our Hands the 18th Day of November 1704.

School-maſters at Rivington.	John Bradley	Thomas Balſhaw.
	Edm: Sweetlove	Robert Foſter.
	James Hart.	Tho. Mother.
	Adam Turner.	George Lee.
	Henry Ainſworth.	John Shaw.
	Thomas Whalley.	John Alatt.
	John Horrobin.	Tho. Nightingall.
	James Worſley.	William Breres.
	Thomas Entuſles.	Rich. Brownlow.
	Rich. Foſter.	

It seems while Mr. *Gill* was in *Lancashire*, and before he was entred into Orders, he serv'd my Lord *Will*——*by* of *Parham* as his Chaplain, Steward, or Attendant.

The Enemies of Mr. *Gill* have been, as he is informed, so diligent to attack this noble Lord, in order to obtain a Complaint against Mr. *Gill*, there having been some Difference, as they said, between them at parting: but being not able to obtain any Certificate from his Lordship against Mr. *Gill*, they became Petitioners to his Lordship, that as he would give them nothing under his Hand against Mr. *Gill*, so he would refuse to grant Mr. *Gill* any thing under his hand in his Justification. We shall not examine into the Justice of this Proceeding; his Lordship, no doubt, had his Reasons for it: but the Attempt, either way, is a manifest Proof the Enemies of Mr. *Gill* have rummaged the Nation for his Character, and left no Stone unturn'd in order to fix the Scandals they have endeavour'd to raise on his Reputation.

But tho' this noble Lord declin'd meddling on one hand or other, Mr. *Gill* has obtain'd more Justice from his Brother-in-law; who, at second hand from my Lord's own mouth, has given an honourable Testimony, of Mr. *Gill* to Mr. *Gill*'s own Father, and sent up under his Hand, as follows.

Mr. *Gill*'s Father's Letter is thus:

Loving Son, Rivington, *Nov.* 30. 1704.

I *Am sorry to hear that you are in trouble. I sent to my Lord* Willoughby *for his Certificate, but I heard that your Adversaries had prevented him; but I did not hear it from my Lord: But I thought that Mr.* Grenehalgh's *Certificate would not be much inferior, because he married my Lord* Willoughby's *Sister, and that you were both Boarded at his House. And if you will have any Certificate from the Neighbourhood, I question not but they will all Certifie for you. So hoping you are in good health, as we are all at present, praised be God, I remain*

Your ever Loving Father whilst

ROBERT GILL.

The Certificate thus:

Adlington, *Nov.* 30. 1704.

T*Hese may Certifie whom it may concern, That my Lord* Willoughby *and Mr.* Abraham Gill *were Boarded at my House together for two Years and upwards; and since Mr.* Gill *left my Lord's Service, I have heard my Lord commend Mr.* Gill, *saying he was the best Servant he ever had;*

had; and I have known Mr. Gill *from a Child, and he being in my Family as aforesaid, was faithful and just all the time, and was a Man of sober Life and Conversation. As witness my Hand,*

Sa. Grenehalgh.

Next to this, and besides Mr. *Gill's* Affidavit already mentioned of his being a Freeholder in *Lancashire*, which the Justices will find they ought to have considered, here follows an Affidavit of the same, and of his being a Freeman or Burgess of a Corporation; and by both these he had a Right of Voting in the Election of Members of Parliament, and consequently was exempted by the very Act of Parliament by which they pretended to send him for a Soldier.

OLiver Greenhalgh *of* Horwich *in the County of* Lancaster, *maketh Oath, That he this Deponent very well knows* Abraham Gill *the Son of* Robert Gill *of* Rivington *in this County. And this Deponent farther saith, That the said* Abraham Gill *is now legally intitled for the term of his natural Life of and in several Closes or Parcels of Land lying in* Rivington *aforesaid, of the clear yearly value of forty Shillings* per Ann. *and upwards. And moreover this Deponent saith, That Mr.* Ralph Banks, *Town-Clerk for the Borough of* Wigan *in this County, shewed him this Deponent his Record or Roll kept for the said Burrough, wherein was mentioned, that on the 18th Day of* September 1688, *(to this Deponent's best remembrance) the said* Abraham Gill *was Sworn a Burgess within the said Borough of* Wigan.

Oliver Greenhalgh.

From *Lancashire* we are to trace him into the Isle of *Ely*, whither he came with his Family, and settled, as has been already noted, in the Parish of *Maney*, where he Preach'd two years: Of which and his Behaviour there, take the following Certificate, Sworn to by Ten of the Inhabitants of that little Town.

THomas Harrison *of* Maney *in the Isle of* Ely *and County of* Cambridge *Yeoman*, Richard Bellamy, William Cross, Thomas Benn, William Curtis, William Hales, William Page, *and* Thomas Neale, *all of* Maney *aforesaid*, Richard Finch *and* Edward Newborne *of the same, maketh Oath, That they have known Mr.* Abraham Gill, *now Minister of a Dissenting*

Congregation at Upwell, *this ten or twelve Years, or thereabouts. He was our Miniſter for about two Years, and well ſettled in our Pariſh with his Wife, who lived together very conformable and peaceably. He was Able and Diligent in his Teaching, he was no Drunkard nor Swearer, but lived a pious Life and Converſation amongſt us. And theſe Deponents do farther ſay, that, to their knowledge, the ſaid Mr.* Gill *never had two Wives living at one time, but that he married his now Wife after his former Wife's Deceaſe.*

Tho. Harriſon.	Will. Hales.
Rich. Bellamy.	Will. Page.
Will. Croſſe.	Tho. Neale.
Tho. Benn.	Rich. Finch.
Will. Corties.	Edw. Newborn.

For his Behaviour in *Upwell*, where he has ſince reſided, and which has been the Scene of this Tragedy, take the two following Affidavits.

Edward Birch *of* Wimblington *in the Iſle of* Ely *and County of* Cambridge, *Gent. maketh Oath, That* Abraham Gill *of* Welney *in the Iſle and County aforeſaid, is a Preacher to a Congregation of Proteſtant Diſſenting Subjects in* Upwell *in the County of* Norfolk, *and that the ſaid Mr.* Gill *hath been a Preacher in and about* Welney *aforeſaid for ſeveral Years laſt paſt, and that he is now, and all the time hath been, well approved of for a Teacher, and very charitable to the Poor, and hath lived well in Fame and Plenty amongſt his Neighbours. But this Deponent farther ſaith, That he believes Mr.* James *Rector of* Upwell, *and Mr.* Lateward *Curate at* Welney, *have maliciouſly deſigned to ruin the ſaid Mr.* Gill *and his Family, conſiſting of a Wife and four ſmall Children, for they have been very troubleſome to the ſaid Mr.* Gill *for near two Years, having cauſed him to ſpend very much Money in defending himſelf from their unjuſt and malicious Proſecution; ſo that they have now reduced him to Poverty, and at laſt would force him away for a Soldier from his Congregation, where he is beloved, and may have very good Maintenance. And this Deponent farther ſaith, He was with Mr.* Gill *at* Cambridge *in the Months of* March, April, *and* May, *in* 1703, *where Mr.* Gill *was a long time kept Priſoner at the Complaint of Mr.* James, *without any Cauſe ſhewed at all: and at the Requeſt of Mr.* Gill *and ſeveral of his*

good

good Friends, he this Deponent and one Mr. Thomas Neale *Bailed Mr.* Gill *out of Jayl, Mr.* Gill *being bound in* 120 l. *and this Deponent and Mr.* Neale *in* 60 l. *each of them: and Mr.* Gill *appeared the next Seſſions then after; and as there had been no Cauſe of his Impriſonment before, ſo nothing appeared againſt him ſtill, as the Court declared; but they removed him to* Norwich *Aſſizes from thence, where this Deponent hath heard and believes, that upon Mr.* Gill's *ſtaying all the time of Aſſizes* July *laſt, and nothing could be brought againſt him, he was diſcharged by my Lord Chief Juſtice* Holt *and my Lord Baron* Smith, *or one of them. And this Deponent believes, that Mr.* Gill *never gave any Cauſe of Offence to Mr.* James *and Mr.* Lateward, *except it was by being more charitable to the Poor, and more diligent, and better beloved and approved in his Place than they are.*

Edward Birch.

JOhn Johnſon *of* Upwell *in the County of* Norfolk *Yeoman, maketh Oath, That* Abraham Gill *of* Welney *in the Iſle of* Ely *in the County of* Cambridge, *is a Preacher to a Congregation of Her Majeſty's Proteſtant Diſſenting Subjects in* Upwell *aforeſaid, and that the ſaid* Abraham Gill *hath been a Preacher in the ſaid Pariſh of* Welney *for ſeveral Years laſt paſt, and that he is now, and all the time hath been, well approved of by his Congregation. And this Deponent farther ſaith, That about the latter end of* April *laſt paſt, it was reported at* Upwell *aforeſaid, That Mr.* Gill *was Impreſſed and ſent away for a Soldier, to the great ſorrow and grief of the greateſt part of the Pariſh; and that he this Deponent about that time going to* Wisbech *aforeſaid to ſee Mr.* Gill, *found him an Impreſſed Man, and guarded amongſt others that were Impreſſed Men, and kept as Priſoners in a Room in an Inn in* Wisbech *aforeſaid. And this Deponent verily believes, That Mr.* Hugh James *Rector of* Upwell, *and Mr.* Lateward *Curate at* Welney, *have maliciouſly deſigned to ruin and undo Mr.* Gill *and his Family, conſiſting of a Wife and four ſmall Children; for they have by ſeveral barbarous ways of Proſecution brought the ſaid Mr.* Gill *and his Family to Poverty, notwithſtanding Mr.* Gill *hath been a Freeholder in the ſaid Pariſh, and lived in Plenty amongſt his Neighbours, and is now generally beloved, except with a few that dare not diſpleaſe Mr.* James *and Mr.* Lateward. *And this Deponent verily believes, all the Cauſe of Mr.* James *and Mr.* Lateward's *Malice againſt*

Mr.

Mr. Gill, *is becauſe Mr.* Gill *Preached oftner and better, was more diligent in his Miniſtry, and more charitable to the Poor, and better approved of in the Pariſh than they are.*

John Johnſon.

From hence let us follow him in his Afflictions; and in the very Priſon we find the Jaylor *(who was a Woman)* teſtifying to his Sobriety, his Piety, and his Charity.

ELizabeth Heylock, *Keeper of the* Tolbooth *in the Town of* Cambridge, *Widow, maketh Oath, That* Abraham Gill *of* Welney *in the Iſle of* Ely *and County of* Cambridge, *Gent. hath been in her Cuſtody, as a Priſoner, for ſome time: and during all the time of his Impriſonment, he lived Soberly, Honeſtly, and Religiouſly; inſomuch that by his Chriſtian-like Behaviour and Converſation, from his coming into Priſon till the time he was releaſed, he ſo prevailed upon the other Priſoners, that there was a Reformation amongſt them. And this Deponent farther ſaith, That when any Money was given to the Priſoners to Drink, he the ſaid Mr.* Gill *ſhunned Drinking to Exceſs, and conſtantly adviſed others againſt Drinking more than was neceſſary to refreſh Nature, and carry'd himſelf ſoberly and honeſtly towards all the People in Cuſtody, and others alſo.*

Elizabeth Heylock.

We next bring you a Tradeſman of *Cambridge*, one of his Creditors, and a Perſon that has reaſon to know him, both while he was a Priſoner there, and before; who Teſtifies, both from perſonal Knowledge and publick Enquiry; and by him you have even the Voice of Common Fame: So that this Affidavit ſeems to contradict thoſe Gentlemen who ſay he was a Man of ill Fame amongſt his Neighbours, turbulent and diſorderly, or bred a Diſturbance in the Pariſh, as in Mr. Juſtice *Upwood*'s and other Affidavits.

RIchard Jardine *of* Cambridge *in the County of* Cambridge, *Linnen-Draper, maketh Oath, That for this ſix Years laſt paſt he has been intimately acquainted with* Abraham Gill *of* Welney *in the Iſle of* Ely *and County of* Cambridge, *Gent. And that during all this Deponent's Acquaintance with him, he has had the Character of an honeſt, ſober, peaceable Man. And farther*

ther ſaith, That he this Deponent has had frequent occaſion, by means of his Trade and other Buſineſs, to be in the Country where the ſaid Abraham Gill *did formerly live, and doth now live, and has been oftentimes in the ſaid Mr.* Gill's *Company, and never at any time found him diſorderly, irreligious, or any ways vicious in his Converſation. And this Deponent hath heard among the Neighbourhood where the ſaid Mr.* Gill *lived, That if any Controverſies, Quarrels, or Suits of Law did happen in his Neighbourhood among the Neighbours, he always offered his Mediation, and recommended Peace amongſt them, and has by that means ended ſeveral Differences and Diſputes between his Neighbours. And farther ſaith, That the ſaid Mr.* Gill *is very well beloved by the Pariſhioners of* Welney *and the neighbouring Pariſhes, and gives good Content and Satisfaction amongſt them, and hath been charitable to the Poor, and obedient to the Late as well as this Preſent Government. And ſaith, That within this twenty Days his this Deponent's Buſineſs called him to* Welney, *where he made a Viſit to the ſaid Mr.* Gill, *and found him in a very weak and poor Condition, having been afflicted with Sickneſs for a conſiderable time, as he and the Neighbourhood told this Deponent.*

Richard Jardine.

And yet more effectually to ſettle this matter of Character and Reputation among Neighbours, we conclude it with the Affidavit of fourteen more of the Inhabitants of his Pariſh and Neighbours; and when all is done, let any of his Antagoniſts produce better Vouchers for their Reputation, if they can.

WIlliam Gibſon of *Upwell* in the County of *Norf[illegible]* Yeoman, James Seaman *of the ſame Town and County* [illegible]*n*, Robert Macum, Robert Gill, Richard Tokel[illegible]e, George Slacksbe, Joſeph Sampſon, Thomas Watſon, Peter Sumers, John Marriott, Benjamin Silke, Valentine Smith, William Mann, Robert Macum *jun. do ſeverally make Oath, That Mr.* Abraham Gill, *a Preacher to a Congregation in* Upwell, *hath for ſeven or eight Years laſt paſt been a Preacher in the ſaid Pariſh, and was never, to our Knowledge, a common Drunkard nor Swearer, nor had two Wives at once, but had one Wife, and after her Deceaſe married another. And that the ſaid Mr.* Gill

hath

hath been and is a Man of very ſober pious Life and Converſation, and ſuch a one as we deſire may ſtill be our Miniſter.

William Gibſon.	Thomas Watſon.
James Seaman.	Peter Sumers.
Robert Macum *ſen.*	John Marriott.
Robert Gill.	Benjamin Silke.
Richard Tokelove.	Valentine Smith.
George Slacksbe.	William Mann.
Joſeph Sampſon.	Robert Macum.

And to finiſh theſe Vouchers, here is the Licence for the Meeting affix'd; which they have never attempted to prove Forg'd, any more than they have Mr. *Gill*'s Orders.

BY *vertue and in purſuance of a certain Clauſe or Proviſo in this behalf mentioned and contained in an Act of Parliament or Statute made in the firſt Year of the Reign of King* William *and Queen* Mary, *intitled,* An Act for exempting Their Majeſties Proteſtant Subjects diſſenting from the Church of *England* from the Penalty of certain Laws; *Theſe are humbly to Certifie, and it is hereby Certified unto the Worſhipful* John Jeffery *Clerk, Maſter of Arts, Archdeacon of the Archdeaconry of* Norwich, *That the Dwelling-houſe or Barn of* Upwell *in the County of* Norfolk, *is a Place uſed, and to be uſed, for holding and keeping Meetings and Aſſemblies of divers Perſons of Her Majeſty's Proteſtant Diſſenting Subjects Diſſenting from the Church of* England, *for the Exerciſe of Religious Worſhip.* In Witneſs *whereof, I have hereunto ſet my Hand this 24th Day of* March Ann. Dom. 1703.

Richard Tokelove.

An[illegible], Gentlemen, to go farther with our Adverſaries than they can expect we ſhould —— what if we ſhould ſuppoſe for once that this *Abraham Gill* was this immoral Man they ſpeak of, if he was ſuch a refin'd Cheat as to have Deluded all the *Many, many honeſt People* who have Sworn to his Character, for who knows how far the Wit and Subtilty of Man, under the Agency of a hardned Mind, may furniſh a Man; and what Miſts the Devil may have laid before the Eyes of Mankind, that this Man ſhould be a Common Drunkard and Swearer, and Cohabiter with two Women at once, and a Congregation of ſeveral Hundreds of his Hearers where he liv'd

liv'd all the time know nothing of it, nor his Enemies be able to produce one Affidavit of any Man that ever ſaw him Drunk, or heard him Swear.

But ſuppoſe theſe ſtrange things come to paſs, for the World is full of ſtrange things, what can be Inferr'd from hence to juſtifie the Treatment he has receiv'd, and all the Diſſenters through his Intereſt?

But on this premis'd Suppoſition I crave leave to draw a few Inferences, which ſhall ſerve to the Cloſe of this Work.

1. All the Forgeries, all the Swearings, Drunkenneſſes, and Lewdneſs they pretend to charge upon him, are antecedent to his being a Diſſenter; and we do not find he receiv'd the leaſt Diſturbance in the Execution of his Function on account of theſe known Immoralities, and might to this day have kept his two Women and his Cure of Souls both together, as too many of his Brethren have done before him, and are like to do after him, for any great Care we ſee taken to prevent it, had he but continued to read the Common Prayer.

I forbear to diſcant upon this unhappy Truth; and of the many known Inſtances of an immoral Clergy, ſhall repeat none, but rather cover the Infirmities of our Guides, that the Obligation, if poſſible, may move them both to reform, and to hide thoſe of their Neighbours.

2. Were all the Immoralities he is charg'd with True, they are not comparable to thoſe committed in his Proſecution: the Perjuries, Subornations, Cruelties, Injuſtice, and illegal Proceedings, are intolerable. This is Caſting out Devils by *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils: This is the Devil turn'd Reformer.

3. What's all this to going for a Soldier? If every Clergy-man muſt be Liſted that will be Drunk, if Swearing an Oath will pull a Man's Band off and ſend him to the Army, if every Clergy-man that keeps a Woman more than he ſhould do muſt go into the Army, *Lord have mercy* and *a Croſs* ought to be ſet upon the Doors of a great many Church-Tenements, and perhaps we need not have ſo many ſevere Acts of Parliament for raiſing Recruits.

Wherefore, upon the whole matter, we are not ſo concern'd to Vindicate Mr. *Gill*'s Character, ſince were he all they could alledge, it does not in the leaſt palliate or excuſe their Dealings with him, nor will it be any Extenuation of their illegal Practices when it comes to be Examin'd before a Court of Juſtice.

'Tis therefore enough: Let them rummage Mr. *Gill*'s Character to the bottom, let them confute the many Affidavits we have

produced, perſwade the World to believe him an ill Man, a Drunkard, a Swearer, a Whoremaſter, or any thing, we humbly conceive it is all againſt them ſtill; for they do not Perſecute him as an Immoral Man, if they had, why did they not do it long before? for it muſt have been known then: but they Perſecute him as a Diſſenter, a Diſturber of the Neighbours with a Conventicle, Preaching in *Welney Chapel* without Reading the Common Prayer: theſe were the Crimes. All his Vices, if they were true, *(which nevertheleſs we do not grant)* were committed while he was *Mr.* Gill *the Curate*, not ſince he was *Mr.* Gill *the Diſſenter*. He was *Their Mr.* Gill when they ſay he kept an ill Woman: he is unaccus'd of the leaſt Immorality ſince he was *Our Mr.* Gill. What will they ſay to this part of it? This makes it a peculiar Pique at a Party, a Puſh made at the Diſſenters, a Sally of the Method call'd *The ſhorteſt way*, ſending our Miniſters *a Colonelling*, Voting them a ſort of People that do not live by a lawful Calling, and can give no good Account of themſelves; and therefore, in the Eye of the Law, are Vagabonds, and may all be Liſted for Soldiers, *&c.*

We have therefore nothing more to ſay for Mr. *Gill*; we need not undertake the Vindication of his Morals, we have the Inhabitants where he was Born, and Married his firſt Wife; we have the Inhabitants of *Maney*, and of *Upwell*; All theſe Sign to his Morals, and the People Swear that he is ſuch a Man as they deſire to be their Miniſter. If his Morals are bad, the Morals of the People ſhould be queſtion'd that deſire a Common Drunkard and Swearer to be their Miniſter. We leave the reſt of the Caſe therefore upon them: if he is an ill Man, they will, no doubt, make the Diſcovery, and diſmiſs him, in Vindication of their own Character; if not, but he continues to be their Miniſter, and they deſire he ſhould be ſo, 'tis a better Teſtimony of his Character than ſome Hundreds of the Vicious Clergy of the Church of *England* can produce, whoſe Hearers and Pariſhioners would turn them out for their Debaucheries, if they knew how: And of this I do not deſire to be forc'd to enter into the Particulars.

FINIS.

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